







Nat's cookin' Foodie?

Gulp. Gorge. Gobble. If the very sight of these words makes your world go around, wait till you sift through our menu.

- First on list, Active Foods. A blend of health and flavours that don't just taste good but do good.
- Next, Regional Cuisine. Where age-old recipes are co-created by the chef and local homemakers to give you a taste of grandma's cooking.
- As for breakfast, in-room, midnight snacks and after-lunch munchies, the All Day Diner is open 24/7.
- The fact that you don't just read a menu but study it word for word, makes you our kind of auv. And we'd love to tickle those taste buds silly and keep you amply happy.

Live to eat and vice-versa at The Gateway.

24/7 SERVICES > ALL DAY BREAKFAST > ACTIVE FOOD > ACTIVE STUDIO EAT-IN >> EXPLORE >> IN-ROOM YOGA >> EXTENDED POOL HOURS





🚮 thegatewayhotel 💓 thegatewayhotel

www.thegatewayhotels.com



THEGATEWAY

HOTELS & RESORTS

Upcoming: Pune • Corbett • Chandigarh • Kolhapur • Navi Mumbai • Shirdi • Shimla • Kochi • Trichy • Tirupati • Dehradun • Zirakhpur



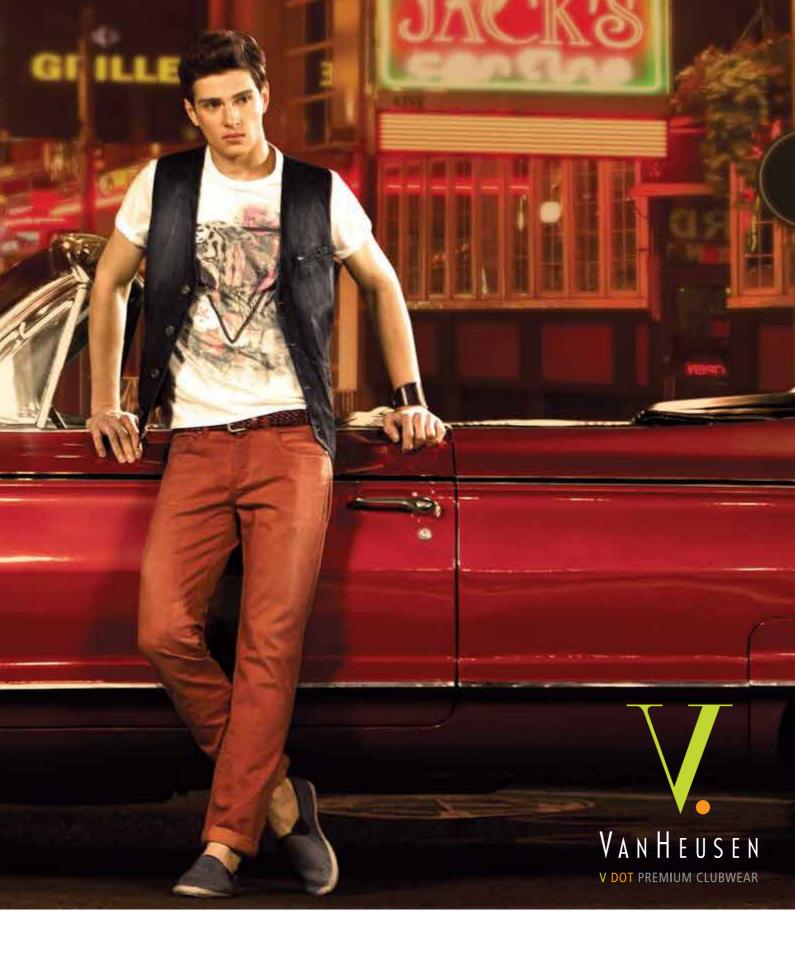














adidas originals stores: New Delhi: N-Block, Connaught Place & Bungalow Road, Kamla Nagar. Mumbai: Linking Road, Khar. Bengaluru: No. 261, Brigade Road. Chennai: Khader Nawaz Khan Road, Nungambakkam. Hyderabad: Jubilee Hills Road No 36 & Forum Mall, Kukatpally. Chandigarh: Sec-17E, SCO 43. Goa: M. G. Road, Panjim. Shillong: OB Shopping Mall. Nagaland: C. K. Rio Complex, Dimapur. Kochi: Lulu Mall, Edapally.





adidas.com/superstar
#SUPERSTAR



AVAILABLE AT ALL THE LEADING WATCH STORES IN DELHI NCR, MUMBAI, KOLKATA, CHENNAI, HYDERABAD, BENGALURU, COIMBATORE, CHANDIGARH, JAIPUR, AHMEDABAD, SURAT, PUNE, NASHIK, COCHIN, TRIVENDRUM, BHUBANESHWAR, LUCKNOW **SERVICE CENTER**: VICTORINOX INDIA PVT. LTD., MUMBAI - 022 3366 8888 I **FOR INFORMATION CONTACT**: 9819257107.

<u>Victorinox Swiss Army watches purchased through unauthorized retailers or the Internet in India will not be covered by the manufacturer's warranty.</u>

CONTENTS

ROLLING STONE | MARCH 2015



ON THE COVER: (standing, from left) Monica Dogra, Tipriti Kharbanagar, Anushka Manchanda and Vasuda Sharma. Photographed by Ashish Shah; All clothes by Tommy Hilfiger from SS2015 collection. Styling by Roli Gupta; Hair and Make up by Jean-Claude Biguine

FEATURES

Sting Operation

Ahead of the release of their 18th album and after 50 years of being together, German hard rock band Scorpions feel that it's too early for the band to retire *By Anurag Tagat*.......48

The Liberation of Sam Smith

ROCK & ROLL

Djentleman's Club

In the last year, some of the Delhi metal scene's most memorable releases have come from modern progressive metal bands who have chosen polyrhythms and synths over straight-up riffs.... 44

Hook, line and swagger

How Chandigarh-born
Chennai-based female rapper
Manmeet Kaur became Indian
hip-hop's most outspoken artist
with her blistering debut *Hip Hop Bahu.......34*

DEPARTMENTS

MUSIC REVIEWS

Dylan Digs Into a Deeper Blues

Covering romantic pop songs once sung by Sinatra, he finds a new way into rock history PLUS Björk, Neel and the Lightbulbs, Scorpions, George Ezra, José González and more.......83

RS PLAYLIST

"FourFiveSeconds"

This year's greatest mini-

supergroup makes a black-andwhite clip to match its simple soulful single.

PLUS Colleen Green,
Torres, Steve Earle and the
Dukes, Courtney Barnett
and Thermal And A
Quarter94

GAMES

Not Goodwill Hunting

rollingstoneindia.com



ONLINE EXCLUSIVES

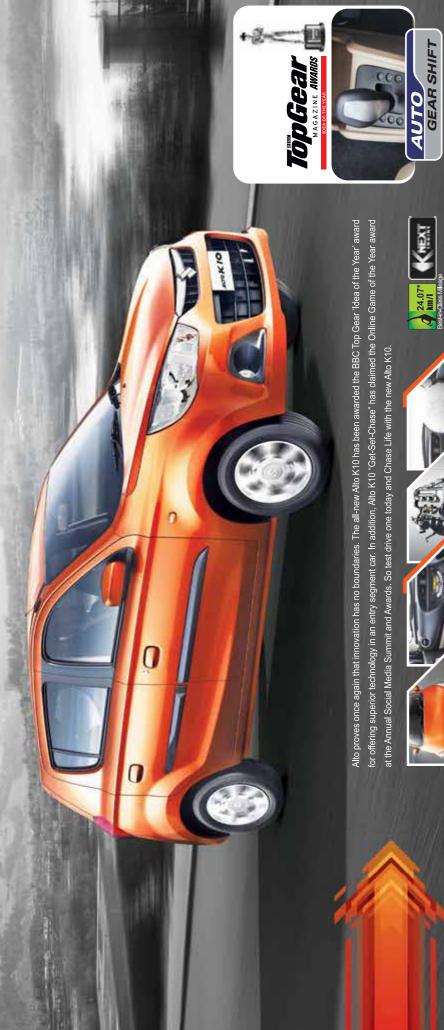
ROLLING STONE METAL AWARDS 2015

All the action from the sixth edition of the annual Rolling Stone Metal Awards, featuring performances by Bengaluru thrash/death metal band Inner Sanctum, Delhi progressive metal band Colossal Figures and more in Mumbai.



Chase Innovation. Chase Glory.

Alto K10 AGS wins BBC Top Gear Idea of the Year Award.

















-60 km/h in 5.3 s • Piano Finish Stereo • Gear Shift Indicator • Fog Lamps • 3 New Exciting Colours • Available in 6 variants (including CNG)



www.marutisuzuki.com/altok10. Alto K10 'Get-Set-Chase' online game, visit: https://www.get-set-chase.com. For Alto K10 'Breathless Chase Mix': http://youtu.be/hTrbKyjA7Ak.
Visit your nearest Maruti Suzuki dealer today, Accessories shown are not part of standard equipment. Car colour may vary from actual body colour due to printing on paper. Specifications may vary basis variant. "Test Results of Rule 115 CMVR, 1889.

ROLLING STONE INDIA

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF & PUBLISHER: Radhakrishnan Nair **FDITOR:** Lalitha Suhasini **CREATIVE DIRECTOR:** Kapil C. Batus STAFF WRITER: Anurag Tagat TRAINEE WRITER: Jessica Miranda ASSISTANT ART DIRECTOR: Hemali Gandhi JUNIOR DESIGNER: Tanvi Shah DIGITAL ARTIST: Jayesh V. Salvi **CONSULTING EDITOR:** Anup Kutty CONTRIBUTING EDITORS: Sunil Sampat, Palash Krishna Mehrotra, Milind Deora, Soleil Nathwani

EXECUTIVE PUBLISHER: Minal Surve **GROUP DIRECTOR:** Arpito Gope MARKETING TEAM: (Mumbai) Sushant Ishwarkar, Tulsi Bayishi, Manisha Manchanda; (Delhi) Sanjay Seth (9818697279); (Chennai) Sathish Anand (9841023010); (Kolkata) Subrata Mazumdar (9831131395) ACTIVATION TEAM: Suchit Shetty (9930358352), Ashwin Sharma, Eisha Bahirwani, Shanu Solanki

GENERAL MANAGER: (CIRCULATION) Nadim Shaikh (9821895795) DEPUTY GENERAL MANAGER (CIRCULATION): Prasad Herur (9844139043)

CIRCULATION TEAM: MIS & Operations -Santosh P. Gajinkar (9969571319)

EDITORIAL OFFICE: 401, 4th Floor, Todi Building, Mathuradas Mills Compound, Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel, Mumbai 400013. Tel:67487777. REGISTERED OFFICE: 5th Floor, Cecil Court, Mahakayi Bhushan Marg, Mumbai 400001 E-MAIL: editor@rollingstone-india.com, circulation@rollingstone-india.com REGIONAL OFFICES: 24/01, First Floor, Hauz Khas Village, New Delhi 110016; 33/1, Santhome Ist Stage, 1st A Cross, Indira Nagar Bangalore 560038; 2, Nabapalli (Bindanpalli), Kolkata 700084 **DISTRIBUTION: IBH India Pvt. Ltd. &** Magazine Distributors

ROLLING STONE USA

EDITOR & PUBLISHER: Jann S. Wenner MANAGING EDITOR: Will Dana DEPUTY MANAGING EDITOR: Nathan Brackett ASSISTANT MANAGING EDITORS: Sean Woods
SENIOR WRITERS: David Fricke, Brian Hiatt, Peter Travers SENIOR EDITOR: Christian Hoard **DESIGN DIRECTOR:** Joseph Hutchinson CREATIVE DIRECTOR: Jodi Peckman EDITOR AT LARGE: Jason Fine VICE PRESIDENT: Timothy Walsh PUBLISHER: Chris McLoughlin ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER: Michael Provus EDITORIAL OPERATIONS DIRECTOR: John Dragonetti

LICENSING & BUSINESS AFFAIRS: Maureen A. Lamberti (Executive Director), Aimee L. Schecter (Senior Manager), Kathleen Taylor (Coordinator) Copyright © 2014 by ROLLING STONE LLC. All

Copyright © 2014 by ROLLING STONE LLC. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without permission is prohibited. The name ROLLING STONE and the logo thereof are registered trademarks of ROLLING STONE LLC, which trademarks have been licensed to MW.Com India Private Limited.

Printed and published by Radhakrishnan Nair on behalf of MW.Com India Private Limited.

Printed and published by Radnakrishnan Nair on behalf of MW.Com India Private Limited.
Printed at Spenta Multimedia, Peninsula Spenta,
Mathuradas Mill Compound, N.M. Joshi Marg,
Lower Parel, Mumbai - 400 013.
Published at MW.Com India Private
Limited, 5th Floor, Cecil Court, Mahakavi Bhushan
Marg, Mumbai 400001.

EDITOR: Radhakrishnan Nair All rights reserved worldwide. Unsolicited manuscripts will not be returned. www.rollingstoneindia.com

Correspondence Love Letters e3 Advice



In The Nick Of Time

Stevie Nicks is such a strong woman. I grew up with Fleetwood Mac and over the years, I've followed her journey through her triumphs and her fall from grace. But she's still standing. Your cover story captured her life in such a powerful way. Kudos!

Karishma D'souza, Bengaluru

Manic Men

I've been an avid reader of Rolling Stone for many years now and I've always been impressed how the magazine and the site have tracked all the happenings in the Indian music scene before anyone else has heard about it. The studio piece on menwhopause was fantastic. I love the Delhi band and I'm looking forward to their new album.

Rabinder Adhikari, Delhi

Dhruy On Groove

Whether it's Ila Arun, Etienne Mbappe or Vasuda Sharma, it's great to know that guitarist Dhruv Ghanekar's new album will bring all these artists together. Dhruv is such an underrated artist. Props to you guys for getting all the news about his album.

Karan Sharma, Mumbai

Tree Of Life

I feel so fortunate to have had the chance to watch Steven Wilson when he came to India. in 2009. He is an artist that never ceases to amaze with his perspective on life, the world and everything that one has to deal with. Take, for example, his new album which he's written in a female voice. One word describes it: visionary.

Nikhil Rao. Chennai

All Wired

I pick up the magazine every month and go straight to the Metal Wire section. It's fantastic that you cover metal consistently month after month. I have great respect for Sahil Makhija for managing all these bands and his Headbangin Kitchen project. I hope his solo album is a blast.

Temsu Lkr. Kohima



Contact Us

LETTERS: ROLLING STONE INDIA, MW.Com India Private Limited, 401, 4th Floor, Todi Building, Mathuradas Mills Compound, Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel, Mumbai 400 013.

E-MAIL: editor@rollingstone-india.com Letters/e-mails will be edited for brevity. SUBSCRIBER SERVICES: circulation@rollingstone-india.com, 022-61436327-29

🛐 Rollingstoneindia 🥑 Rollingstonein

EMPYRofROCK: THE WAR CRY



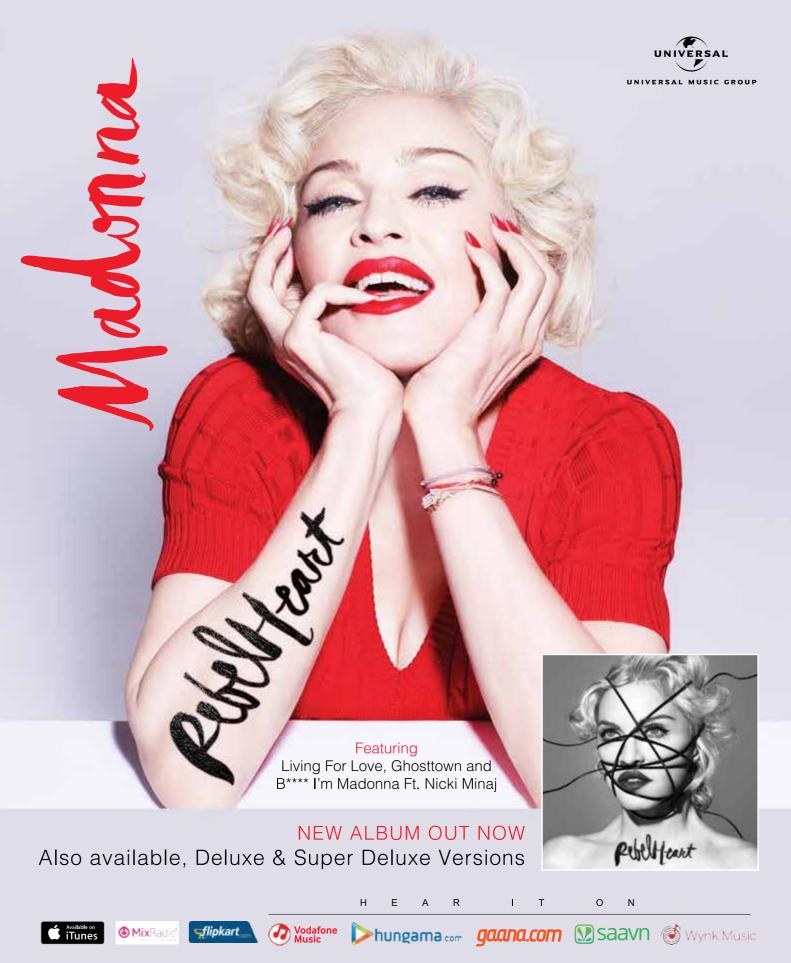


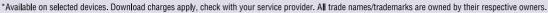


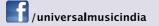
FIND YOUR MOMENT #ckminute

Calvin Klein

swiss made









ENGALURU-BASED FOLK METAL band The Down Troddence [TDT] walked away with eight awards at the fifth edition of the Rolling Stone Metal Awards last year, but this time around, the awards show and performances get bigger and louder. RSMA travels to Bengaluru, Delhi and Jaipur for the first time with shows building up to the grand finale in Mumbai.

Mumbai extreme metallers Demonic

"This feels like

we needed to

says Colossal

Karan Mehta.

break the ice,"

just the platform

Figures guitarist

Resurrection, who performed alongside TDT last year, are nominated in all eight categories this year for their fourth album, THE DEMON KING. Frontman Sahil Makhija aka The Demonstealer agrees that the recognition is the best part, "We don't make music for awards, but it's nice to know you're still being appreciated by this small

metal 'industry'."

Past winners at RSMA such as prog metal band Skyharbor and post-hardcore band Scribe have both been nominated nominated at this year's RSMA. While Skyharbor will be away on a back-breaking 29-date tour across Europe, Scribe are finding their feet amidst a lineup change that replaced vocalist Vishwesh Krishnamoorthy with singers Siddharth Basrur and Viraaj Saxena late last year. Krishnamoorthy, who peaked as a vocalist with multiple voices, beat-boxing and lightspeed rapping on their nominated third album HAIL MOGAMBO, gains a nod in the Best Vocalist category. Scribe tally in sec-

ond among nominees, with seven nominations, while Skyharbor has five nominees. Scribe guitarist Prashant Shah says, "We wanted to give Sid and Viraaj their own canvas to paint on, sonically. Yes, it will be different, as they have a different skill set than what Scribe has had in the vocal direction. Having said that, there are four other members that remain the same. So it's going to be really exciting to mix all the elements together."

Providing stiff competition to the likes of Scribe, DR and Skyharbor are newer bands such as Shillong experimental metallers Aberrant, who are nominated in six categories for their 2014 self-titled EP, and Delhi progressive metalcore band Colossal Figures. with five nominations for their debut album CLOCKWORK DI-

LATION. While Colossal Figures guitarist Karan Mehta counts being nominated as a big honor, he's even more excited about their debut Mumbai show at the awards event on March 22nd. Mehta is also coorganizing the first ever set of RSMA pre-gigs in Jaipur [March 7th] and Delhi [March 8th], featuring headline sets by past winners such as groove/tech metal band Undying Inc. and thrash/death metallers Devoid. A week ahead of the Mumbai finale, RSMA rolls into Bengaluru for an all-thrash metal lineup including veterans Threinody, Sceptre and The Down Troddence on March 15th.

Meanwhile, Mehta has a busy month ahead of him with Colossal Figures performing in Jaipur and Mumbai. Says Mehta about playing in Mumbai, "Ever since the album came out, we've wanted to come down to Mumbai and play, but we never got the right opportunity. This feels like just the platform we needed to break ice, with what we have been told is the best crowd in the country."

Joining Colossal Figures at RSMA in Mumbai are Bengaluru thrash/death metallers Inner Sanctum, who launch their debut album Legions Awake at the show. Known for their intense club sets, will perform at an indoor venue in Mumbai, BlueFROG, for the first time. Bassist Abhishek Michael says, "It's going to be sick. I'm expecting huge pits, bodies flying across the room and just a super intense show."

The international jury is also packed with heavy hitters this time including prog metal band SikTh guitarist and producer Dan Weller, heavy metal vocalist Tim 'Ripper' Owens [previously part of Judas Priest and Iced Earth], heavy metallers Saxon's vocalist Biff Byford, goregrind band Cattle Decapitation's vocalist Travis Ryan and more. In its sixth edition. the Metal Awards [RSMA] has grown from being more than just one of the loudest nights of year, spotlighting bands from across the country as big winners in the past years. After TDT swept RSMA in June last year, Munz said a lot more people - fans and gig organizers - knew of the band. As Munz describes this year's edition of RSMA, "It's a big player game this year. It only gets bigger and more awesome every year."

ROLLING STONE METAL AWARDS 2015 NOMINEES

Best Band

Aberrant Colossal Figures Demonic Resurrection Scribe Skyharbor

Best Album

Aberrant - Aberrant Colossal Figures - Clockwork Dilation **Demonic Resurrection** - The Demon King Scribe - Hail Mogambo Skyharbor - Guiding Lights

Best Song

Aberrant - "The Vanguard" Demonic Resurrection - "The Demon King" Feeding in Atlantis - "The Firefly" Kraken - "Dance Jane Dance'

Scribe - "Ha! Ha! We are Poor!" Skyharbor - "Evolution"

Best Vocalist

Aberrant - Ryngkat Jyrwa Colossal Figures - Govind Marodia Demonic Resurrection - Sahil 'The Demonstealer' Makhija Hyperion - Shashank Bhatnagar Murk Blare - Vipul Verma Scribe - Vishwesh Krishnamoorthy

Best Guitarist

Aberrant - Jerry Nelson Ranee & Imti Kharkongor Demonic Resurrection - Demonstealer & Daniel Kenneth Rego Guillotine - Takar Nabam

Scribe - Akshay Rajpurohit & Prashant Shah Skyharbor - Keshav Dhar & Devesh Dayal

Best Bassist

Colossal Figures - Karsan Chaudhary Demonic Resurrection - Ashwin Shrivan **Pyramids** - Amol Vikram Singh Scribe - Akshay Rajpurohit Skyharbor - Krishna Jhaveri

Best Drummer

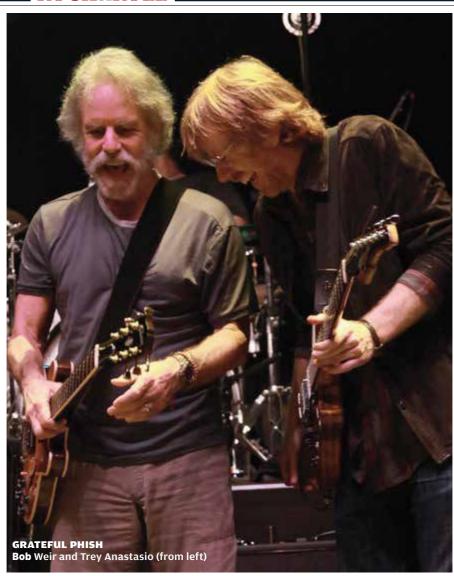
Colossal Figures - Rijul Victor **Demonic Resurrection -**Virendra G. Kaith Pangea - Jai Row Kavi Scribe - Virendra G. Kaith

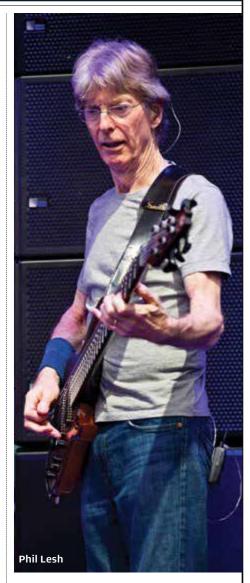
Aberrant - Rex Kharrngi

Best Keyboardist

Demonic Resurrection - Mephisto Guillotine - Akshat Taneja Kraken - Reuben Das







Inside the Dead's Final Ride

Trey Anastasio on the Grateful Dead's historic reunion shows this summer. By David Fricke

N JANUARY 5TH, JUST AFTER HIS band Phish ended a four-night run of shows in Miami, singerguitarist Trey Anastasio received an e-mail from Phil Lesh, the former bassist of the Grateful Dead. Lesh asked Anastasio to join him and the other surviving members of his band - guitarist Bob Weir and drummers Bill Kreutzmann and Mickey Hart - onstage for reunion concerts this summer marking the Dead's 50th birthday and the 20th anniversary of the passing of founding guitarist Jerry Garcia. Anastasio recalls his immediate reaction: "It was a thrill and an honor." Still, he adds, "I thought about it for a minute, tried to think about the implications." Then he said yes.

"Phil said all four of them thought it was the right thing," Anastasio says of the shows, to be held at Soldier Field in Chicago on July 3rd, 4th and 5th. Garcia last performed with the Dead at that 61,500-seat stadium, on July 9th, 1995; he died a

AZZARO CHROME UNITED



THE NEW FRAGRANCE

ROCK&ROLL -

month later, on August 9th at 53, of a heart attack. Anastasio notes that Lesh, in his message, "talked about the healthy relationships between the band members," that the reunion "was going to be a real positive experience. And Phil said, 'This is the last

time I'm doing this.' He seemed pretty definitive about that."

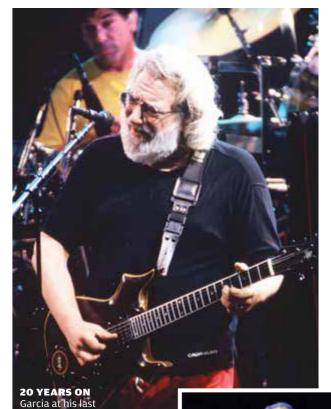
The Dead's July run - dubbed "Fare Thee Well" and featuring keyboard players Bruce Hornsby, who played with the Dead in the Nineties, and longtime Weir and Lesh sideman Jeff Chimenti - is on track to become the biggest single-act concert event of the year, and possibly the largest ever. Two weeks after the shows were announced, ticket requests via presale mail order totaled more than 400,000, well past capacity. Peter Shapiro, the New York-based promoter and entrepreneur who conceived the shows, says he and co-producers Madison House Presents are "looking at going 360" - opening up the seating behind the stage - and "going general admission" on the field "to accommodate more people and have more of a vibe.'

Shapiro estimates the cost of producing "Fare Thee Well" - and potential revenue - in "the multiple millions of dollars. But with this response, we can put on a show that takes the spirit of the Grateful Dead, what they were doing production-wise, and push it to the highest level." He promises vintage touches such as a tapers' section, specially printed commemorative tickets and "a safe, energetic lot scene." The demand for tickets ensures that "not everyone is going to get in," Shapiro warns. So he is working on simulcasting the shows around the country; Shapiro is already holding the dates at his venues, including the Capitol Theatre in Port Chester, New York, and the Brooklyn Bowl.

The road to "Fare Thee Well" began in early 2014, when Shapiro made his first proposal to Weir, Lesh, Hart and Kreutzmann, based on returning to the site of their last concert with Garcia. The four received other offers from Live Nation and the producers of the Coachella and Bonnaroo festivals for 50th-birthday performances. (The Dead played their first show, as the Warlocks, in May 1965.) But Shapiro, 42, had special qualifications. He "grew up on Dead tours," as he puts it; ran Wetlands, the New York jam-scene club, from 1996 to 2001; and since then has promot-

ed many shows with the ex-members, particularly Lesh. "I believe in it," says Shapiro. "I'm a fan. I want to see it."

Anastasio's history with the Grateful Dead goes back to his first show, at the Hartford Civic Center in Connecticut in



"I'm providing a service," Anastasio says of his role in what is likely the final Dead reunion. "The cool thing is it got me back inside the guitar. I thank them. And I thank Jerry."

show, Chicago, July

9th, 1995. Below: Hornsby, who will rejoin the Dead this

summer.

1980. The guitarist regularly attended Dead gigs through 1984, when he began to focus on the launch of Phish. In 1999, he performed with Lesh in San Francisco at the bassist's first concerts after his 1998 liver transplant. Anastasio has also played with Weir and Kreutzmann. "The flow of the whole thing," Anastasio claims, "is in my DNA." Yet, he admits, "I never sat down and studied what Jerry played until the last two weeks.

"It's really been unbelievable," he says, taking a break on a recent morning from his now-daily regimen of practicing Dead songs and analyzing the melodic purpose in Garcia's soloing and the musical genealogy inside his most iconic licks. "A couple of days ago, I started listening to 'The Wheel' [a Dead-show standard from Garcia's 1972 solo album, *Garcia*]. There's a line he plays

after the first verse – it slides all the way from the bottom of the neck to the top. I learned it exactly, note for note. Then what I do, since I don't want to go out there and just copy Jerry – I play it in all 12 keys, so that I get it into my body.

'The thing is, there is a lot more intent in those lines than people might think," adds Anastasio. "It was not just noodling. Based on the number of ideas Jerry had in any one-minute period, he was very much a musician first, a guitar player second. The music was coming out, and the guitar was a vehicle, a transparent filter." Garcia has also been, for Anastasio, a historical guide. Working through Garcia's "country-vernacular" playing in a Seventies version of "I Know You Rider" led Anastasio to a new passion. "All of a sudden," he says, "I found myself listening to Buck Owens, this Bakersfield-country sound," and particularly Owens' legendary lead guitarist, Don Rich. "That's what I've been doing, lis-

tening to Don Rich to get to Jerry."

Anastasio and Weir have traded lists of Dead songs -60 apiece – that each would like to play. They will meet "in a couple of weeks," Anastasio says, to "play a few things together and connect." The full band will "rehearse in June a little bit." Anastasio expects the singing to be largely shared by Weir, Hornsby, himself and the audience. "People have such lifelong relationships to these songs," Anastasio says.

Then, a week after the Chicago shows, Anastasio will be back on the road with Phish. Asked if he is putting a lot of work and heart into an experience that will last only three days, Anastasio replies firmly, "No. To me, it's a labor of love. I'm learning so much. I kind of went away from this [in 1984]. Now I'm coming back to it, a little bit older, and rediscovering some great little gems.

"I'm providing a service," Anastasio says of his role in what is likely to be the final live Grateful Dead reunion. "The cool thing is it got me back inside the guitar. I thank them. And I thank Jerry."



Play and perform Indian melodies with Yamaha's exclusive portable keyboard range



₹22,990/-

The Guru of all Indian Keyboards

The Yamaha PSR-I455 has been specially optimized for recreating the unique sound of Indian instruments in your keyboard. It has 753 voices and 206 styles built-in, 19 voices feature Indian instruments and 26 styles provide automatic accompaniment, ideal for Indian music

Unique function called the **Tabla/Tanpura**, generating Taal variation can be found here.





₹15,990/-

Super Realistic and sweet voices

PSR-I425 is enabled with Super-realistic Cool! And Sweet! Voices. It has 514 Voices and 162 Styles, including 10 Indian Voices and 12 Indian Styles. Loaded with new features like Sound Control Knobs giving the user real time control effect of filter, envelope generator and resonance. It also features 50 different types of arpeggios.





₹6,590/-

The first Indian Keyboard

PSR-F50 is the keyboard, ANYONE will find easy to operate and play. Select a voice and style to start playing and have fun. Despite its compact, lightweight body, the PSR-F50 packs in a regular size keyboard together with 120 Voices and 114 Styles from all over the world. What's more? This instrument is ideally suited to a wide range of different playing scenarios. Ideal for beginners and students, it can also be powered with batteries for outdoor performances.

Yamaha Music Square:- Bengaluru (Indira nagar): Thomsun Music House: +91-80-42543000, Phoenix Mall: +91-80-67266588, (HBR Layout): +91-80-25445844, Chandigarh: Amrit Music +91-172-4004078, Chennai: Musee Musicals: +91-44-26320006, Cochin: Thomsun Music House: +91-484-4099923, Delhi NCR: Times Lifestyle: +91-124-4106565, Dimapur: Melody Centre: +91-9612161933, Guwahati: Ace Acoustics and Audio Video Solutions: +91-361-2466601, Hyderabad: Musee Musical: +91-40-66201535, Indore: Total Music: +91-731-4202030, Jaipur: Rajputana Ent.: +91-141-2390338, Kolkata: International Audio and Music Pvt. Ltd.: +91-33-22879200, Lucknow: Orion TechnoArts: +91-522-3292595, Mumbai: Skybird Inc: +91 9619333557, Raipur: Music Ville: +91-771-4069466, Shillong: Melody: +91-9436100121, Nagarcoil: Thasor Musicals: +91 94433 40898.

Direct Retail Partner: - Agra: Sweety Musicals: +91 9837107665, Bengaluru: Furtados: +91-80-41104304, Chennai: Nippon Enterprises South: +91-44-42909888, Saptaswara Musicals: +91-9840765881, Cochin: Manuel Industries: +91 9447084842, Delhi: Furtados: +91-11-46170900, Raj Musicals: +91 9810230320, Ernakulam: Manuel Industries: +91 9447986753, Goa (Margao): B X Furtados & Sons: +91-832-2213278, Kerala: Sai Musicals: +91 9447066821, Kolkata: Braganza & Co: +91-9903192164, Musician Mall: +91-33-22360524, Lucknow: New Capital Electronic: +91 9415306666, Mumbai: Bhargava's Musik Pvt. Ltd.: +91-22-26411842, B X Furtados & Sons: +91-22-66224112, Furtados: +91-22-26211801, Salu Music: +91-22-26469031, Electronic Enterprises: +91-22-24461336, Pune: Furtados: +91-90-20-260136963, Musical Mart: +91-20-26361085, Siliguri: Rockstar Music: +91-353-2576023, Tirupati: Ananth Electricals & Hardwares: +91 9849793468, Vadodara: Jitendra Musical: +0265- 2222047, Bhopal: Dev Industries: +91 9893070980, Vijayawada: Taal Music Palace: +91-866-6610223, Amritsar: Khem Singh & Sons: +91 9988723223, Hyderabad: SA RE GA MA Music Store: +91 8686584235, Khords: +91 9849099949, Bhubaneswar: Marik Sound and Music: +91 9900089376, Bharati Electronics & Musicals: +91-9437072266, Visakhapatnam: Harmony Musicals: +91-891-6633643, Mysore: Decibel Acoustics: +91-9886398088, Thiruvananthapuram: Laya Musicals: +91 9349337454.

Authorised Distributor: - Kolkata: Dynamic Trading Co. (09830025765), Guwahati: Dynamic Trading Co. (09830025765), Hyderabad: Deccan Music (09000655522), Chennai: Deccan Music (044-25205250), Pune: Jethmalani Distributors (08983318273), Mumbai: Jethmalani Distributors (9224891232), Gujarat: Jethmalani Distributors (09879212387).

www.facebook.com/ymindia

Young Blood Blues Twenty-year-old Surat-based

Twenty-year-old Surat-based guitarist Aayushi Karnik's journey from the school choir to India's best known blues festival

THEN SHE WAS JUST 12, Aayushi Karnik watched the videos of John Frusciante, former guitarist with American funk rockers Red Hot Chili Peppers' and Brit rock legend Jimmy Page of Led Zeppelin and taught herself how to play the guitar. Practice sessions for her meant playing the guitar every day in front of her entire school as part of the morning assembly. When she was 17, Karnik, who was born and raised in Surat, co-founded a blues rock band named Red Blues with a bunch of friends in early 2012. The 20-year-old Karnik, who also has a diploma in architecture, says that the band has not been active since 2013. She adds, "It was just studies and jobs that took up everyone's time. Plus, I had to work on my guitar skills." But the young guitarist has been steadily learning her chops by performing with some of the best musicians in the Indian music scene.

Karnik is a standout female guitar player who managed to impress the likes of Mumbai guitarist-composer Ehsaan Noorani. As recently as 2013, Noorani nudged Fender, the American guitar manufacturing company he endorses, to take notice of Karnik's talent. Soon, she was spotlighted at music festivals across the country. She won the

Axe's Power Guitar contest in Dimapur, Nagaland in November 2013, which was judged by Rudy Wallang, lead guitarist of Shillong blues band Soulmate and fusion guitarist Sanjay Divecha from Mumbai.

A week after her Dimapur win, Wallang invited Karnik on stage at Bacardi NH7 Weekender 2013 in Bengaluru, as part of the all-star blues jam band called the Fender Benders, where she jammed with Noorani, Mendonsa and Amyt Datta from Kolkata rock band PINKNOISE. All of them are now her mentors, she admits. Karnik adds, "They're supporting me and telling me what I should do to improve."

This year, Karnik finally made it to the biggest platform for blues bands from across the country this year. She took to stage at the Mahindra Blues Festival in

FRET LESS Aayushi Karnik

"After playing at Mahindra Blues, I went back to older blues like Stevie Ray Vaughan." Mumbai, headlined by blues greats such as Buddy Guy and Doyle Bramhall II. Karnik admits with a laugh that playing at the fest was a tough pressure test, "At least in a school choir, you're hiding behind

a bunch of girls." The ambitious guitarist made it to the festival stage after she participated in the Mahindra Blues Band Hunt, which would give the winning band an opportunity to play a 30-minute slot at the festival, held earlier this year.

The band she put together for the competition included drummer Biju Karthik, who was previously part of Thiruvananthapuram-based reggae band The Grasshoppers 6 and and her former Red Blues bandmate Jeet Pathak on bass. Karnik had met Karthik, when enrolled for a four-month guitar module at the Swarnabhoomi Acad-

emy of Music [SAM] near Chennai last year. She says that the semester taught by Brazilian guitarist Ricardo Vogt and faculty member/fusion guitar player Ed De-Genaro was challenging, but necessary. Says Karnik, "It was fun, but it took me a while to get a hang of it. I had to get my basics clear."

Although she stuck to pleasing the blues crowd by trying her hand at covers such as Jimi Hendrix's "Voodoo Child" and Sam Cooke's "A Change Is Gonna Come," Karnik says that playing with a band is a learning experience. Karnik adds, "It had been a long time since I played with a band, at least a whole year." Unlike Red Blues, Karnik says her new band won't be a blues band. Out to nail down their own original sound, there might be a bit of country, soul and R&B in the mix, since that's what's currently on the guitarist's playlist.

COURTESY OF MAHINDRA BLUES FEST





Swarnabhoomi Academy of Music Presents: A Five Day workshop with world renowned artists.

April 6th to 10th fully residential camp

Bored of your routine? Stuck in a rut?

SAM has the perfect antidote.

This April, attend our 5 day workshop and experience what it's like to study alongside incredible artists from around the world.

The 5 day workshop at SAM with our award-winning international faculty will give you new knowledge, techniques and inspiration for your music.



Shreyas Narayanun Carnatic Vocals

Umayalpuram Mali

& Indian Percussion

Konnakol

Brian Metreyon

Guitar

REGISTER NOW www.sam.org.in

For enquiries +91 8754489805

Concession for Bands!
sam.org.in/application
Write to: info@sam.org.in
for details

https://facebook.com/swarnabhoomiacademyofmusic www.sam.org.in.





Not So Superficial

Fake breasts, double crossing spies and comics inform the music of Mumbai blues singer Kanchal Daniel and her band, The Beards

MAN CANNOT PROFESS HIS love for a woman because he suspects that she is a secret agent. Who would have thought a double crossing spy could be at the centre of a raging blues track? Twenty-three-year-old vocalist Kanchan Daniel did. Her track "The Road" might have been a song about beating cancer, but Daniel tells us that her ailment has been only one of the means to channel the blues. The Mumbai-based vocalist, who has just finished her course in clinical psychology says that she finds inspiration in all kinds of art including the music of Canadian blues singer Layla Zoe and even the silent comic strip Spy Vs Spy. Says Daniel, who fronts the band Kanchan Daniel And The Beards, "Most of the songs

are based on personal experiences or the fact that I'm pissed off with somebody and want to put it down in a song." Of course, one of her more popular songs on stage is about fake boobs. Says Daniel, "I wrote it (the song "Superficial") about fake tits, but the idea behind it is about being true to yourself, and that's what I hold to the blues."

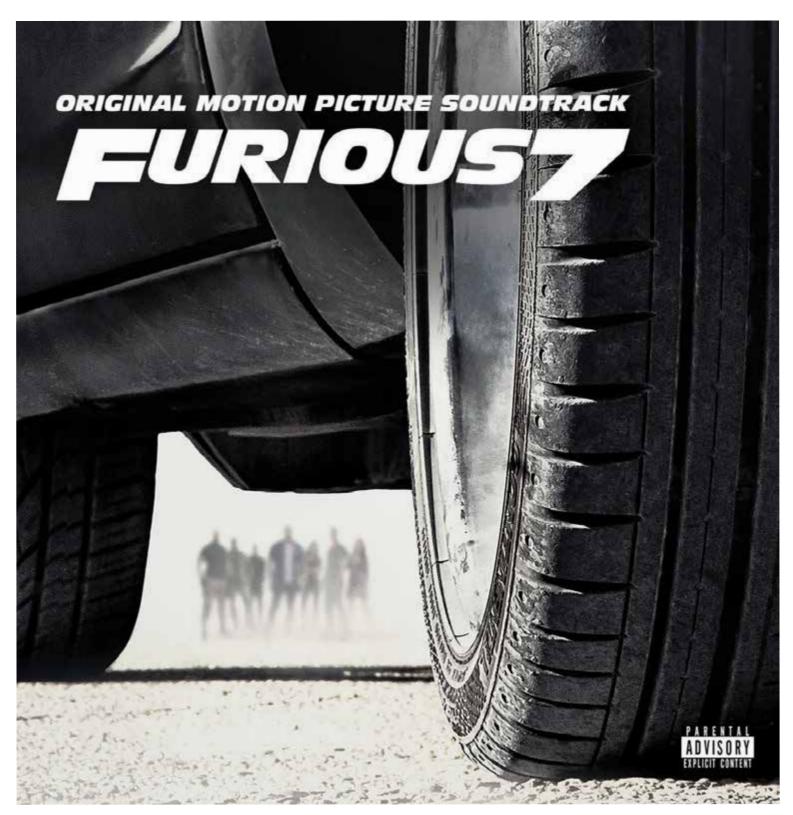
Kanchan Daniel and the Beards, all either in their early Twenties with the exception of guitarist Kush Upadhyay [17] and keyboardist Mukesh Lobo [29], have a great time playing the blues, and bring in other influences including R&B, soul, funk and psychedelic rock to form a free flowing stream of sound. The band began taking shape in 2012, when the vocalist met Lobo. After a few lineup changes, they settled on drummer Varoon Aiyer from Mumbai

rockers Split and formerly of alt punk band BLEK, Upadhyay and bassist Anand Kamath who comprise "The Beards". Says Lobo, who runs Globe Studios in Mumbai, "I'm not a blues person. I'm a New Age person. If you want to hear my music, I can play it to you. I started composing music and realized I can keep shifting genres. That happened the moment I met Kanchan. It's not about having an attachment – it just comes naturally." Daniel adds that despite her parents' love for blues, she only got into it when she started college. "I just find it easier to connect to this music," says Daniel, who has even composed a tribute to the genre called "Why I Sing the Blues." Other songs on their as yet untitled debut seven-track album include the raging blues of "Black Heart," the dedication to Layla Zoe's stage persona that is "Blue Rain," the spy love story of "Tick Tock," and the soulsoaked "SOS."

With the album due in March this year, the band hopes to play bigger stages across the country and introduce the blues to younger audiences. Says bassist Kamath, "We get to play blues and be hip at the same time. It's the best of both worlds."

FEATURING

T.I., DAVID GUETTA, IGGY AZALEA, WIZ KHALIFA, DJ SNAKE, LIL JON, FLO RIDA & MANY MORE!



OUT ON MARCH 17TH









Second Run



The American electronic rock band's sophomore album is a heady concoction of rock, punk and synth-pop

OTHERFUCKER, I'll be back from the dead soon." screams Awolnation's frontman Aaron Bruno on their latest single "Howling Moon (Bad Wolf)." The American electronic rock band, whose wildly popular track "Sail" won them millions of fans across the world, nominations at every major award show and a reputation as a one-hit wonder, are back. Haters aside, the Los Angeles band have spent the last year in the studio and are ready to deliver their highly anticipated second album Run. Ask Bruno whether the success of 2011's Megalithic Symphony left the band torn between the pressure to produce another massive album and the opportunities that it gave them access to, and his answer is conflicted. He says, "It definitely pushed me harder than ever before and made it more difficult to turn in another record." Bruno, who has previously been a member of lesser known groups such as post-grunge band Home Town Hero and indie rock band Under the Influence of Giants, says that Run has challenged him at every step and given him room to scratch every artistic itch. Adds Bruno, "I've only ever made debut albums; I've never made a sophomore album or follow up records. But I think knowing that we have a very loyal fan base gave me the freedom to make the record that I wanted to

without having to chase any sort of commercial success."

Continuing their experimentation with acoustic instruments and electronica, Awolnation deliver a much more introspective set of songs. Run is nine-track collection that features tracks such as "Drinking Lightning," "Fat Face" and "Jailbreak." Says Bruno, "This record is about facing fears head on and tackling the age old questions of what life's all about, what happiness is and just human emotions." The band, which comprises Kenny Carkeet on keyboards and rhythm guitar, Drew Stewart on lead guitar, newcomer Isaac Carpenter on drums and Bruno on vocals, synthesizer, drums, percussion, keyboards, guitar and piano, have used the last year to hone their understanding of the kind of music people love. Adds Bruno, "I was allowed to make this record with a tunnel vision focus. I was in a vulnerable place when I was writing and recording this record, I put a lot of pressure on myself to try to be the very best I could be."

Awolnation will follow the release of *Run* with a world tour that covers the United States, Switzerland, Austria and more. Says Bruno, "We were asked to play a show in India a few winters ago, but we weren't able to go. But that would be a dream come true, it's not a place that everybody gets to go."

JESSICA MIRANDA

JAZZCORNER

BY SUNIL SAMPAT

THE WONDERFUL LADIES OF JAZZ



IN NOVEMBER 2013 AT THE JUS' JAZZ Festival in Mumbai at the NCPA, four stellar jazz performers – violinist extraordinaire Regina Carter, pianists Renee Rosnes and Helen Sung and the bubbly vocalist Fantine (with Igor Butman's band) – were featured in the festival. It was a topic

of discussion that so many women were dominating the jazz scene. There seems to be a prevailing impression that the jazz scene is largely a male bastion, and in terms of sheer numbers involved this might well be true. However, numbers don't tell the full story...

The dominance by women of the vocal jazz scene is quite overwhelming. Between Bessie Smith, Billie Holiday, Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Anita O'Day, Carmen MacRae, Dinah Washington, Betty Carter, Etta James and a few other powerful voices, the jazz vocal scene has a very rich history.

Bessie Smith sang the blues in the early 1930s; in her singing you can feel the pain and anguish of the lyrics. Billie Holiday took this emotion to an even higher level. She started out as a vocalist with Count Basie's legendary band: her musical interaction with Basie's great tenor saxophonist, Lester Young, throughout her singing career was quite magical. Young was a quiet, shy individual who didn't speak much - but made up with his musical expressions, particularly in the company of Billie Holiday. Her 1939 composition and recording of 'Strange Fruit' made many Americans uncomfortable. The fruit in question, hanging from trees, were black men and women who were lynched in the American South. It was powerful political commentary and caused even the FBI to take notice and identify Billie Holiday as a trouble maker.

Ella Fitzgerald has been dubbed by the great Duke Ellington as "the first lady of song". She made over 150 records - most were bestsellers but her magnum opus has been her recordings of the American Songbooks. The magnificent compositions of Cole Porter, George Gershwin, Harold Arlen, Irving Berlin, Jerome Kern and Duke Ellington have been rendered immortal by Ella Fitzgerald in what are some of the finest jazz recordings of all time.

Sarah Vaughan was, perhaps the most complete jazz singer. Starting in the bebop era with Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie, Vaughan went on to convey a song to her audience in the contemporary style of the time. Her recording career from the late 1940s up until 1988 has a superb body of recorded work. Surprisingly her voice just got better with time.

Not to be outdone by what preceded them, Carmen MacRae and Betty Carter brought further variation in their singing. Carmen was the master of enunciation and timing with her deep, husky voice and sense of humour. Two albums from her, "The Great American Songbook" and "Carmen sings Monk" are works of sheer art. She also sang "Hey John", her tribute to John Lennon.

Betty Carter used her voice as a jazz instrument and has a unique place among jazz vocalists. She explored to the fullest extent the possibilities of rhythm and harmonics in her singing. A lucky few got to hear her in Mumbai at a Jazz Yatra!

Diana Krall is a contemporary great vocalist. Check out the video of her performance, "Live in Paris". You will be happy you did!

Sunil Sampat is a jazz critic and Contributing Editor of Rolling Stone India. Write to Sunil at jazzwala@gmail.com

G-SHOCK

Rolling Stone

Metal Awards 2015

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

Zippo



THE MINERVA CONDUCT

MARCH 22, 2015 • 7:30PM ONWARDS • blueFROG

GUITAR PARTNER

Gilisul

VENUE PARTNER





Hook, line and swagger

How Chandigarh-born Chennai-based female rapper Manmeet Kaur became Indian hip-hop's most outspoken artist with her blistering debut 'Hip Hop Bahu'

Punjab University, 2005. At an allboys house competition, with parents, siblings and teachers in attendance, there's a pause between the performances. The host attempts to plug the fidgety silence. He asks if anyone in the audience might care to put their talent on display. Up springs this nerdy 15-year-old; her mother sits her down. All she says is, "Mom, please!" When she's done rapping her original verse, everyone in the 1,000-strong audience breaks into applause. Everyone, except her parents.

Twenty-three-year old Manmeet Kaur tells her story in the 13th floor bedroomcum-studio of a producer trio in North Mumbai. The room is traffic jammed with analog gear [synths like Access Virus and Dave Smith Mopho rest alongside the Doepfer A-100 modular system] and Kaur is laying down the vocals for a woozy, off-kilter house tune. Today, the ovation is flying in from all corners of the globe for her debut album, *Hip Hop Bahu*, a lushly produced 11-track journey through what it means to be an independent married woman operating in the world of hip-hop in India.

In India's hip-hop pond, Kaur's conscious rap explores familiar hip-hop tropes like lashing out on wack MCs and misogynists, shout-outs to artists working in the genre [famous Indian graffiti artist Zake aka Prathmesh Gurav appears on "Life of a Writer" and Bgirl Amby (Ambarin Kadri) from Mumbai-based Roc Fresh Crew is referenced in "Art Saviours"] and a nod to her influences, including Detroit rapper J Dilla, whose spirit hangs over every tune.

"Dilla had soul in every beat," says Kaur. Not surprisingly, her album kick-offs with "Made Love to J Dilla That Night." The lyrics portray an artist confident in her own abilities ["Mumbai pori hit it/ Straight up/Arrived on the stage/Sudden eargasmic wave upon all people/Shaking their asses/Up on his African rhythms"] and writing material that's sincere and openly acknowledges her sexuality, ["Made love to hip-hop that night / Nobody in the crowd knew what it was like/ I was wet down there/ While I was acting all right."] all in an idiom fashioned by her experiences from Chandigarh to Chennai via Mumbai.

Her mother features frequently in narration, in equal amounts as friend and foe. "My mother was like that wife you cannot divorce," she says. "If you do, you're losing a lot of money. She imposed a lot of stuff on me. I was always at home. She wouldn't even allow me to go my cousin's place to stay over. It was school, home, tutorials, home. When I started doing this [getting into hip-hop], I'd take her phone,

download an instrumental and record my vocals and create melodies or hooks. If I was caught, it was like being caught with a boyfriend."

In this controlled environment, Kaur stumbled into hip-hop. "In Chandigarh, I was a dreamer," says Kaur. "What I had to talk about was the electricity going off. And which relative would be visiting to loathe me. She thought I was into boys and sucked at studies, both true. The only thing there was equality in at home was beatings. It didn't matter if you were a girl or a boy, you beat them." Leaving earlier than scheduled for school, she'd sneak into the nearest cyber cafe and surf the internet to discover the world outside. "I remember the first time I typed the words hip hop and KRS One into Google and checked the Wikipedia entry," she says. "I was like, 'Fuck! This is what I should do every day.' My mom's phone's memory card had room enough for one instrumental. I would prepare a song, download an instrumental, set it aside. And then repeat the process all over again."

It's little wonder that *Hip-Hop Bahu*'s most somber track, "See You Rise," is pointed at both her mother and Chandigarh's equally misogynistic hip-hop crews. The explosion of MCs in the city can be traced to American-Indian rapper Bohemia's [Roger David] 2002 album *Vich Pardesan De* [In a Foreign Land] and his 2006 follow-up full-length album *Pesa Nasha Pyar* [Money, Intoxication, Love]. In the same year, the Desi Beam crew reached out to Kaur, asking her to join their collective.

The teenager rejected the offer, for practical and in hindsight, professional reasons. "I didn't want to be in a crew knowing the fact that I was not good enough to represent anything," she says. "I was pretty honest with myself and with them. When I can't download beats, can't perform, can't do a photoshoot, when I don't have an exposure to hiphop, how can I be hip-hop? They thought I was creating a [higher] standard for myself." she says. Kaur's relationship with one of the crew members, which eventually fizzled, also complicated matters, resulting in testosterone-fuelled character assassination. It didn't help that a close friend with her Facebook password also sent out lewd messages to musicians and promoters across Chandigarh.

The backlash followed her to Mumbai, where she moved in 2011 to study at National College in Bandra. Greeted as a 'bitch and whore,' Kaur found membership to the Young MCs Association tough to come by. At her first performance at a terrace in suburban Mumbai, the male-dominated crowd of 20 refused to make way for her to get on stage. The politicking and the petty feuds further steeled her resolve.

What Mumbai gave in return was everything that she expected, and more. Dedicated internet access ["I filtered the hip-hop out of Youtube for a year"], access to unlim-

ited arts and culture events ["I went alone to anything listed in the papers"] and kindred hip-hop spirits in BGirl Amby, Los Angelesbased rapper Mandeep Sethi and hip-hop DJ Uri. Kadri invited her to join Cypherholics, an open jam for boys in the city, and by extension, introduced her to the larger hip-hop family in the city.

The two got along famously and bonded over being outsiders in the scene. "I had never heard an Indian female MC," says Kadri. "And she's passionate about hip-hop. Whether it's a girl or a guy is irrelevant to me, the person should be hardworking, give it all for the culture and keep it real. People's reactions are mixed when it comes to Manmeet because of her outspoken nature, which is fine, at least she isn't faking it." Sethi, who Kaur had befriended online from her days in Chandigarh, pushed



"I told my momeither I'm coming back at 2 AM or I'm never coming back home," says Kaur

the MC to work on her skills. He encouraged her to look outside the box, to make connections with rappers from America. Seven of the 11 tracks on *Hip-Hop Bahu* are produced by beat-makers in

California — from the Chamber Records crew in San Gabriel to Kazi from LA hiphop legend Madlib's Lootpack crew, the latter a major coup for the artist.

Coincidentally, Sethi was also in Mumbai the same year Kaur moved, and invited her to perform at a now-defunct club in the city. That show changed her life. "I, kind of, eloped with my pen drive," she says. In a cathartic moment, she unleashed the angst of her repressive upbringing. "I told my mom - I'm either coming back at 2am or I'm never coming back home. She was scared. But when I got back, both my parents beat the shit out of me." The incident made Kaur "shameless." For the next four years wrote 35 songs, and most importantly, sourcing beats from international producers.

Mumbai also handed the MC a getout-of-jail card in the form of Bigg Nikk [Nikhil Padmanabh]. The Chennai-based co-founder of the M.W.A [Machas With Attitude] rap crew befriended Kaur after a performance at Worli's Hard Rock Cafe in 2011. He was smitten by her take-no-prisoners attitude and brutal honesty. After a two-year courtship, they married to escape her parents. "I knew if this is what I have to do for my freedom, then it is what it is," she says. "We thought about a live-in relationship, but then our families wouldn't be all right with that."

Nikk is Kaur's biggest critic but also a pillar of support. "Another Old Monk Day" is a laid-back, rum-doused celebration of their friendship ["I poured myself a large in/ Slightly above the margin/ Moment I grabbed my first sip/ My husband barged in/ certified alcoholics/ They call us"]. In typical fashion, rappers began tumbling over each other to welcome Kaur to the fold. "It's fucked up how people started respecting me just because I got married," she says. "I don't want to be associated with people who were not with me when I was alone. Now that it looks like I have Bigg Nikk behind me, fuck Bigg Nikk that way, Manmeet is Manmeet."

Fresh challenges included moving to Chennai in 2013 and for the first time, getting a taste of corporate life, working in the customer service department for a resort company. On "Post Wedding Blues," Kaur recalls the year-and-a-half when "All day/ Every day/ I'm settling". On a string-inflected, melancholic beat, she raps, "I explore relationships/ I know I just can't

quit/ So I relax a bit/ Make myself to fit/ In the situation of high expectations/ I don't wanna mess it up/ I bless shit/ With a smile on my face." The track is closest to her heart, and she says it "inspires me to stay me".

But *Hip-Hop Bahu* would never have seen the light of day, if it wasn't for Dee MC from Mum-

bai. The female MC dissed Kaur on a track: "Calling yourself hip hop bahu / Please, I'm hip hop's daughter / Turning brothers into foes / That's what happens / When man meet's a ho." Her friends, furious with the accusations, egged her to return the favour. "Instead of responding, I started finalizing beats and verses," says Kaur.

Kaur packed a bag full of clothes and another full of instruments and headed to Delhi last year to finish the album. The rapper gave herself a month's time to wrap it up. But before she left, she turned in her resignation at the corporate office she worked at. Recalls Kaur, "The head of the department said, 'It's too early for you to quit on all this. But it's okay.' I told him, 'You know, sir, the great die young. And I can't afford to not do this. I'll meet you when I'm famous." Perhaps that is the Oscar-winning scene.



down through Big Sur, where he had a mushroom-fueled epiphany about songwriting while sitting naked in a tree (more on that later), and finally setting up shop in a buddy-of-a-buddy's Laurel Canyon

Tillman has hung out at the Chateau a bunch of times, he says, with, for instance, Lana Del Rey, who invited him to open several concerts; during one visit, he met Marilyn Manson. "I had this full grownout beard, and Marilyn Manson said, 'How long have you been a lumberjack?'" Tillman recalls. "He was wearing sideswept bangs and this pea-coat thing. I said, 'How long have you been in the gay Navy?'

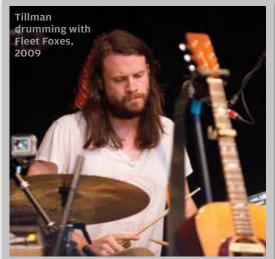
A hostess in a black dress escorts Tillman to a patio table; a waiter named Kevin arrives, recognizing Tillman: "What's up, Josh?" Tillman orders a greyhound and scans the patio. "I have a morbid fascination with this place," he says. "I don't take it too literally. I mean, I like being here and seeing Joseph Gordon-Levitt having a Cobb salad with the RZA. That's cool." He pauses. "I think coming here is kind of the most honest thing you can do in L.A., because the whole city orbits around celebrity, and anyone who tells you there's anything else going on is deluding himself." Also: "I like the spaghetti Bolognese."

The second song on Father John Misty's new album, I Love You, Honeybear, is called "Chateau Lobby #4 (In C

for Two Virgins)," and, as you can likely surmise, it's hardly a straight-up ode to the hotel. Crucial to Misty's warped appeal is that nothing about the project is straightup: Every syllable Tillman sings, and every note he writes, has been run through an elaborate machinery of irony and selfcriticism. On the lead single, "Bored in the USA," Tillman sings about his underemployed generation, beset by consumerism and predatory loans - but he weaves a laugh track into the song to mock his lines. "There's a lot of meta in my songs - when I'm writing, I can't avoid the fact that I'm writing," he says. With stylistic nods to Harry Nilsson, John Lennon and Neil Young, and featuring somber acoustic arrangements, sweeping orchestral suites and one synth jam, the album is, ostensibly, an account of Tillman meeting, falling in love with and marrying the filmmaker-photographer Emma Tillman. "We had our wedding in Big Sur, and I took her up in that tree," he says. But the lyrics feature sentiments not found in Valentine's Day cards, like, for instance, "Maybe love is just an economy based on resource scarcity."

Tillman is the album's antihero, casting himself, at times, in a jarringly unsympathetic light, and often deploying women as set dressing for a saga of mas-

culine missteps and redemption: Here he is in one song, hooking up with a girl he deems idiotic, pretentious and nonetheless irresistible; here he is in another, likening his wife, in a moment of abject jealousy, to "a blow-up doll." Tillman says that at the project's outset, "I was talking big talk, like, 'I'm gonna write songs about love that aren't banal,' but when I finished the album and started playing it for people, I wanted to melt into the floor because I realized I hadn't made an album about love - I'd made an album about myself, in this unbelievably vulnerable way, at the risk of assassinating my own character." The



"Marilyn Manson asked me. 'How long have you been a lumberjack?' And I said, 'How long have you been in the gay Navy?'"

cover art features a rendition of the Madonna and child, with Tillman's likeness gracing the latter's face. "I'm a baby, I'm petty and needy and jealous and greedy," he says, "and I'm turning this woman into a sacred object and a deity. This is what love and intimacy are manifesting as in my life!"

It's pretty intense conversation for midafternoon, but Tillman has always been, by his own account, an intense guy. He grew up in Maryland the eldest son of devout evangelical Christians. "It was the most suburban, bleached-flour kind of scenario you can imagine - aside from the Messianic-Judaism, Pentecostal, speaking-in-tongues, getting-slain-in-the-spirit, having-demons-cast-out-of-you stuff," he says. "For my parents, heaven and hell were real. It's bizarre to contemplate eternal damnation as an eight-year-old." A born skeptic, he never fully bought into his parents' religion. Instead, he got heavily into comics with skewed perspectives,

like The Far Side and Calvin and Hobbes, and for a time he wanted to be a cartoonist. That dream gave way, when he got wind of Bob Dylan, to a musical fantasy, and at 19 he dropped out of New York's Nyack College – a Christian school he'd enrolled in mostly to appease his parents – and moved upstate, where a buddy was building a recording studio in a farmhouse. (Tillman's relationship with his parents, long turbulent, has lately improved - "They've recently begun acknowledging that I'm an artist" - but it's not a subject he enjoys discussing.)

The upstate plan didn't pan out, so Till-

man road-tripped to Seattle with another friend, where he fell in with the local indie-folk scene and, under the name J. Tillman, recorded morose acoustic music he now mostly disavows as dull and sexless. In 2008, Fleet Foxes brought him on as their drummer. "I was making more money than I ever had," he says, but the life of a hired gun, "robotically playing these parts, night after night," started to chafe, and before long he guit the band and headed for California. It was on this trip that he ate the mushrooms, sat in the tree, and realized amid the branches that irony needn't be mutually exclusive with candor. and that he could add humor and sarcasm to his songs without compromising their power. Installed

in L.A., he adopted the moniker Father John Misty as a goof and released 2012's Fear Fun, an album that tackles subjects from boning at Hollywood Forever Cemetery to suffering comically bad avahuasca experiences.

We're on round three or four when Tillman stands up from the table: "I gotta have a smoke, man." In a few days, he will launch a minitour, and he's in California to rehearse – ever the peripatetic, he moved with Emma last year to New Orleans. "She's working on a movie, and I'm more or less hibernating and trying to write," he says. Tillman's habits are healthier these days than they've ever been: He quit drugs, he says, went raw-vegan for a time, and receives acupuncture and wellness advice from a guy he calls "my Qigong master." But the prospect of promoting the new LP has been unsettling him. "The ramp-up to any album makes me very anxious," he says. "Last night I told Emma, 'I need to go out, get drunk and cry.' And that's what I did." Above the patio's tiny smoking section, the sun starts to set, and I've got a plane to catch. Tillman plants himself on a bench with a cigarette in hand. "You go on," he says. "I'm gonna sit here and have another drink."

Vocal Take

American jazz vocalist Natalie John on teaching jazz in India

T A TIME WHEN THE TEACHING OF jazz has become an increasing worldwide phenomenon, we had a chance to chat with an American jazz vocalist. Natalie John. She is teaching vocal techniques at the Swarnabhoomi Academy of Music [SAM] in Tamil Nadu. Originally from California, John moved to the busy, challenging jazz scene of New York city. As a vocalist, she has performed at famous jazz venues such as Dizzy's Coca Cola Club and the Iridium in NYC, and at San Francisco's famous jazz club, Yoshi's. It is clear that she is constantly seeking to expand the boundaries of her craft as she has performed in places as far out and diverse as Peru, Mongolia, Mexico and South Korea among others. India was just a logical next step. Excerpts from our interview with John:

How did you get the Swarnabhoomi assignment?

I met Prasanna, the first and former president of Swarnabhoomi Academy of Music in 2008 while I was a student at The Banff Centre's Jazz and Creative Music Program

in Alberta, Canada. He was a faculty member there at the time and I was fortunate enough to collaborate on some of his original Carnatic jazz fusion compositions. When he was scouting for faculty at the yet-to-be opened SAM in 2010, we got back in touch and I leapt at the opportunity he pre-

sented to travel halfway round the world for the brand new experience to live, teach and play music in South India. This is my third appointment to a faculty position since the school opened in 2010.

What is the student profile and what do you teach them?

Students come from all over India and even abroad. Students have traveled from the US, Japan, Mexico and other countries to take part in a creative atmosphere here. Their own interests vary widely: some are into jazz, metal, Bollywood scoring, world music, you name it! Despite the variety of interests, all students are subject to the same rigorous theoretical and technical training to meet our quality standards when they graduate from SAM. While there has always been a ton of



"Jazz needs patrons and I hope that there will be continued support." freedom to play the music one's own heart desires to play, our teaching methods ensure that the basics and history of both Western and Carnatic music is thoroughly ingrained into each student.

Taking you back to your early days, how did you get involved with jazz?

I didn't grow up listening to jazz. I used to play the trumpet at one time and was exposed to the popular music around, including music from shows and musicals. Then one day, I heard Ella Fitzgerald doing some of these songs [in her famous *Songbooks*] and noticed that she was doing the same songs differently. Then I got to hear Ella sing with Louis Armstrong and loved that music.

I also heard the big bands of Duke Ellington, Buddy Rich and The Brecker Brothers. I love the big band sound with the different sections playing together. I also had the experience of singing in a choir — the teamwork involved and the sound created gives me goosebumps.

I am a fan of vocalese and particularly of the work of Jon Hendricks, where he vocalizes instrumental solos from jazz.

I have deeply admired and adamantly memorized some of the great works of vocalese by Jon Hendricks [anything by Lambert, Hendricks & Ross], Al Jarreau doing "Spain," Carmen McRae [Carmen Sings Monk], Pat Metheny's "Minuano," Kurt Elling doing Coltrane and even the works of my university's choir director – himself a legendary saxophone player, Billy Harper. But this is a studied art form which I highly respect but have never desired to incorporate into my own musical arrangements.

With all the technical advancement of musical equipment and instruments as also training techniques, where do you think jazz is headed?

With so many influences and sounds available to the performer, it is possible to improvise and create more than ever. I'm not sure where this will take jazz, although the mainstream of jazz will always remain.

Jazz needs patrons and I hope that there will be continued support for this wonderful art form.



Mark Ronson

On his funked-up hit single, loving Steely Dan, and what music Amy Winehouse would be making if she'd lived By Brian Hiatt

ARK RONSON IS, AT HIS CORE, A DJ AND A

producer for other artists - he considers his four solo albums side projects. But for his latest, the high-concept Uptown Special, he and Bruno Mars have a Number One hit, "Uptown Funk" - a Morris Day and the Time-like throwback that only hints at the album's diversity, with guests from Tame Impala's Kevin Parker to Mystikal to Stevie Wonder. Ronson, 39, is pleased with the song's success, but after its agonizing months-long genesis, he's even happier just to have finished it. "The thing that I'm really proud of," he says, "is there were so many times when I would leave the studio and be like, 'Fuck, man, I guess it wasn't meant to be.' But we'd get back together and try and save it."

There's a Steely Dan vibe to some of this album, especially in the lyrics novelist Michael Chabon wrote for you. How much did you have that band in mind?

They're always the gold standard that you shoot for if you're trying to make lyrics about interesting characters and weird antiheroes. I feel like Steely Dan's presence has never been more felt in music that's considered hip and vital – you've got the Daft Punk records, and I hear it in stuff like Ariel Pink.

Did you have a second choice for a famous writer? Like, do you think Jonathan Franzen would have killed it?

[Laughs] Michael was the only person I thought of. In my mind, it was an experiment to see if it worked. With a Pulitzer Prize-winning author, it's like, "When is it OK to ask him if he's down to rewrite something?" But he was definitely cool with it. I was thinking of records like "Automatic," by the Pointer Sisters, where it's a pop-R&B record that has lyrics in the verse like, "All I can manage to push from my lips is a stream of absurdities." I wanted to inject some turns of phrase every now and then.

This is your third hit with Bruno Mars, after "Locked Out of Heaven" and "Gorilla." There's obviously some magic there.

There's something just spookily great about Bruno. He taps into everybody's fucking thing – there's artists that have moments when they're in the zone, and their music touches everybody. Same way as Michael Jackson. How come toward the end of his career, there were kids screaming outside

of his hotel who weren't even born when his last massive record came out?

How autobiographical is "Leaving Los Feliz," the song about an aging dude feeling out of place at clubs?

I do go out to clubs in New York and see the friends of my little brother and sister, who are, like, 15 years younger than me, and I basically feel like Uncle Mark. I'm like, "What the hell am I doing here?" But it's not like I'm going in there falling-over drunk and trying to pick up 20-year-old girls. As a DJ, I like

going out to hear whatever the new dude is spinning. But the song is also about how lonely a giant nightclub can be.

"I Can't Lose" so specifically evokes Eighties Jam and Lewis. Were you drawing on particular songs they produced?

No, but I really do love that sound of black radio from '79 to '84. With "Uptown Funk," too, everybody's like, "What song were you referencing?" Nothing! It's just that when me and Jeff [Bhasker] start jamming with Bruno on the drums, we're not gonna play, like, Mahler.

What era do you think was the peak of record production?

For hip-hop, I think of *The Chronic, Midnight Marauders* and *Fear of a Black Planet* – which are all stylistically different. For pure solid-gold crispness, it's between '74 and '79, when multitrack recording was at its peak and records got expensive: *Off the Wall, Aja, Songs in the Key of Life.*

What about the sound of pop now?

In the past, people used technology to push music forward, like Nile Rodgers and Duran Duran messing around with vocal sampling, or Bowie and Eno using the first harmonizer to create strange sounds. Now, people use technology to make records faster and easier, to cover up shitty performances. I still record stuff to tape, and take all this time to get performances, because I think that it makes a difference. There's something in the subconscious brain that knows that's a living, breathing thing.

Do you ever ponder what Amy Winehouse might be doing musically if she

had lived?

She could've made a country-blues record, she could've gotten into making straight jazz records. I really don't know. I mean, her heart was always in jazz and those chords. I'm sure, whether it was me producing the record or somebody else, she would've ended up pushing somebody to create something new. On an extremely different note, did you know that the Internet is convinced that you – as a small

that the Internet is convinced that you - as a smal child - wrote the theme music to the cartoon ThunderCats?

I know, that's such a weird thing! I think someone got in and messed with my Wikipedia page. I was just reading that out loud and I thought it was so funny. I was like, "I'm just gonna leave it."



Bjork

On her gorgeous breakup album, Joni Mitchell, and childhood stardom in Iceland By David Fricke

UGGING AT THE FINGERS ON HER right hand, Björk counts off some recent, traumatic events in her life: a 2012 throat operation; a devastating breakup with her longtime partner, artist Matthew Barney; her mother's heart attack (she has recovered); and the death last year of studio collaborator Mark Bell. "It's been quite a dramatic time," the Icelandic singer admits, "but also very happy." Her new album, Vulnicura - a candid chronicle in strings and electronics of her split with Barney - hit the Top 40 in more than a dozen countries. In March, Björk, who shot to fame with the Icelandic post-punk band the Sugarcubes, will be the subject of a major audiovisual retrospective at New York's Museum of Modern Art. "It was a coincidence when this album came down in the middle of it," she says, but notes, "I get claustrophobic when it's too much of the past."

Has the album cured your heartbreak?

I can't begin to describe how much better I feel, just physically. Obviously, life is not that black and white. Something will happen to me in five years, and it might come back to life. But I am out of that emergency stage, when you feel like a space alien, just possessed.

What did you get out of writing about the breakup? You even date the songs, so we know what you felt when.

It was a survival mechanism. I thought, all the way to the last day [of the relationship], that everything would be fine. Maybe that's why it was such a shock to me. At first, I was just going to put the songs together and not say anything. But putting the months on – it felt right. It would justify being that full of self-pity [laughs]. When people listen to these lyrics, I can go, "It was only two months after the breakup. I was a teenage mess!"

Did you sing love songs in the Sugarcubes?

There were all these poets in the band. It was more about word jokes. "Deus" [on 1988's *Life's Too Good*] was sugary pop about God, which was ridiculous. There were personal songs. [The 1987 hit] "Birthday" is about being in that magic world with

a newborn. We loved turning the lyrics on their head. But when I started my solo albums, it was fresh terrain for me.

Did music and art run in your family?

My grandmother was quite artistic. When her children left home, she went to art school and learned how to be an abstract painter. At Christmas, she would have a party. People played bingo. The person who won got a painting. She passed away, but we still do it. I won this year's painting!

You were 12 when you released your first album in Iceland.
Did you sense that you were

on a path?

I was a little pushed by my mom. I'm not sure she was aware of what psychological work it is to be a public figure at 12. The magic of the studio was the best bit. I kind of wished it would never have to come out, that I'd just make album after album. The guys who recorded me wanted to do another one, but I said, "No, I want to start bands with kids my age."

Did any female singersongwriters from the Seventies inspire you as a teenager?

I loved Joni Mitchell. I never heard her folk records. But I learned [1976's] Hejira and [1977's] Don Juan's Reckless Daughter by heart when I was 15. She was creating her own universe; she wasn't a guest in a man's world. And it was her chord progressions. I liked music that was modal, more chromatic. There is more room for the singer to improvise.

When you had the throat operation, were you afraid you might lose your voice for good?

I couldn't speak for three weeks.

My daughter and I made notes for each other – it became like a game.

But the album was a new beginning.

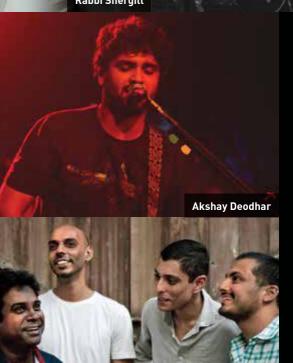
The chorus in "Lionsong" – I was in this forest outide Beykjayik warming up opening my throat like

The chorus in "Lionsong" – I was in this forest outside Reykjavík, warming up, opening my throat like a bird. It was cathartic – you realize the tension that built up, because you were protecting that part of you.

Are you prepared to relive your breakup when you perform the new songs live?

I know I have to do it. If I could have skipped these heartbreak feelings, just go to the next bus stop, I would have been like, "Yes, please!" But there were no two ways about it.







THE KASAULI RHYTHM & BLUES **FESTIVAL 2015**

April 3rd - 5th, 2015 (Easter weekend) at Baikunth Resorts, Kasauli (Himachal Pradesh)

BOOK YOUR DONOR CARDS NOW!

(Includes entry for both days and complimentary bar)

For Donor Cards contact:

dolly.malvai@genesis-foundation.net | +91 9811268189 geeta.verma@genesis-foundation.net | +91 9910179519 karanjolly@gmail.com | +91 9816616668

For more information visit:

http://genesis-foundation.net/krbf-2015/











The Supersonics









For the Long Run

After playing to packed houses in India, prog metallers Skyharbor prep for their longest Europe tour yet to promote their new album 'Guiding Lights'

HEN PROG METAL band Skyharbor was formed in 2011, producer and guitarist Keshav Dhar said he didn't set up India tours since they had few digital or merchandise sales to encourage them. Four years and one very successful album later, Dhar has changed his mind about Indian audiences.

When Skyharbor launched their second album *Guiding Lights* in November 2014, they played to packed audiences at NH7 Weekender in Pune and Delhi NCR, followed by club shows in Bengaluru and Hyderabad, and another open-air show in Guwahati. Says Dhar, "We were really surprised – we sold a lot of merch this time, it was amazing. We ended up fall-

ing short. We had a fair bit of CDs available but they just disappeared. There were a few shows where we had nothing to sell and there were a lot of disap-

pointed people."

Skyharbor are more or less regulars on the European metal circuit now, and they're set to make a bigger mark with their longest-running tour yet — 29 dates in 30 days. The band will be part of an all-internation-

al billing, alongside Australian post-rock band Sleepmakeswaves and Polish instrumental rock/metal band Tides From Nebula when they take to stage this month. Skyharbor are stopping by 14 countries, including UK, Spain, Germany, France, Switzerland and more. Dhar jokes about playing 29 shows with just one day off, "It takes a full day to drive from Paris to Madrid. We can't get there in a day, otherwise we would've put a gig in there as well. Our booking agency is pretty ruthless that way." He's certainly not one to complain about the back-breaking, relentless touring, because the guitarist and producer feels that's the only way the band will break even with their funds. Adds Dhar, "We've always gone into massive losses every time we've gone out. This is really how tours are supposed to be."

While guitarist Devesh Dayal will be taking time off from the Berklee College of Music in Boston and UK-based vocalist Dan Tompkins [now back with prog metallers TesseracT] will give his full attention to Skyharbor for the duration of the tour, but drummer Anup Sastry, who has been busy with Canadian prog metal band Intervals's next album, won't be making it on the tour. Says Dhar, "It's just a case of conflicting schedules." While that's what kept Sastry from touring India last year as well, Skyharbor have roped in Mumbaibased drummer Aditya Ashok, who has previously played with alt metal band Goddess Gagged. Skyharbor asked Ashok, who is also a drum and bass producer who goes by the stage name Ox7gen and plays drums for Mumbai electro dance pop band Shaa'ir + Func, to record a video playthrough of one of their tracks before they could sign him on. Says Dhar, "His style is obviously very different to what Anup's style is, but he pulls it off. He's able to execute it. We can sense that he's had a bit of touring experience as well."

Ashok says playing with Skyharbor on their India tour was quite intense, but 29 shows in a month is a first. Adds the drummer, "I've been playing the whole [Skyharbor] set every day for a month now so that my fingers get used to it, and I'm building my stamina up. You can prepare all you want, but things will obviously change on the road." Just like fans in India were expecting Sastry behind the kit, Ashok is aware he has to prove himself to fans in Europe as well. Says Ashok, "I didn't in-

tend to do exactly what he does, or waste my time learning the intricate fills. I cannot match up to him skill-wise, but I'm playing for the song."

Once the tour is done, Ashok plans to head straight to Goa to laze on the beach, going from Europe's sub-zero temperatures to

sunny days. Dhar on the other hand, says that Skyharbor will continue to work on song ideas. He mentions that Tompkins may get busy with TesseracT, who have plans for a new album release this year. As for Skyharbor, Dhar says, "I don't know what lies ahead, we're just taking it one thing at a time."

"This is really how tours are supposed to be," says Dhar

PARIZAD

Path to Destruction

Bengaluru thrash/death metallers Inner Sanctum on putting together their second Europe tour and releasing their long-awaited debut album 'Legions Awake'



HEN A METAL ALBUM comes with a caveat that it "will make you wet your pants... with semen and piss," fans are already raising horns. Those who know Bengaluru metal band Inner Sanctum will agree that it's not odd or scandalous when its vocalist Gaurav Basu says things like "There was

some penis time while recording as well." Basu is referring to the making of Inner Sanctum's debut full-length album *Legions Awake*, set to release this month, six years after they launched their debut EP *Provenance* in 2009.

When we sat in for the band's vocal tracking sessions in Bengaluru's Adarsh Recording Studio in Bengaluru last year, Basu stripped down to boxer shorts in the vocal booth just to feel "comfortable enough" to nail the growls. While recording and producing the album was easy, writing Legions Awake took too long, admits the band. Says bassist Abhishek Michael, "Everything else was a piece of cake. But we're glad we didn't rush

into anything, we are extremely happy with how things are turning out." While "Wake of Destruction" was one of the few songs that Sanctum still hasn't played live, the heavy hitters that have found their way onto the album include "March of the Wounded," "Tainted Soils," "Reflections of the Past" and a surprise new track called "Existence Denied," which will feature guest solos from death metal's top guitarists, although the

"Writing took

everything else

was a piece of

cake," says

too long, but

band refuses to reveal names. While they released their first new material in six years – the no-holds-barred riff fest "Wake of Destruction" – in January, there are plans to release to release another single off the eight-track album soon.

Legions Awake took time to release also because the band was busy touring at a few festivals around Germany and Poland in 2013. Of course, Basu has a few intimate stories to share from their shows abroad as well: he recounts how their German tour manager lost his underwear in a lake in Poland, and suffering an "unpleasant experience" of seeing guitarist Suraj Gulvady's privates. Hopefully, there

will be fewer disturbing memories when they perform at Norway's Inferno Metal Festival in Oslo. Says bassist Michael, "There has been a longstanding relationship with Inferno and metal bands from India [Bengaluru metallers Kryptos, Mumbai extreme metallers Demonic Resurrection, Delhi groove/tech metal band Undying Inc. have all performed at Inferno] which is part of this cultural exchange with Norway. I've been in talks with Jan [Martin Jensen, the head of Inferno] for quite a few years now. Inferno is pretty big for us." Including a set at Inferno, which takes place in April, Michael says Inner Sanctum is plotting at least 15 tour dates across Germany and the Netherlands.

Closer home, they're working on a few launch shows for *Legions Awake*, with confirmed shows in Bengaluru and their first ever club show in Mumbai, at the sixth annual Rolling Stone Metal Awards. Says guitarist Chintan Chinnappa about playing club shows, "Some of our most memorable gigs have actually been indoor venues. There is something about stuffing a room with angry metal heads that just gets us going."

ARAN PATI

Djentleman's Club

In the last year, some of the Delhi metal scene's most memorable releases have come from modern progressive metal bands who have chosen polyrhythms and synths over straight-up riffs



RMED WITH SEVENstring guitars, digital audio workstations (DAWs) and a guitar processor/pre-amp like Axe FX II, the world has enough bedroom guitarists who are inspired by the likes of Misha Mansoor. Mansoor launched his solo project Bulb and then launched American prog metal band Periphery. Tosin Abasi from Washington D.C.'s Animals As Leaders is another artist who has influenced prog metallers since he founded the band in 2007. Closer home, bands from Delhi such as Colossal Figures, Murk Blare and solo act Define Destiny have taken to prog metal and gained an impressive following. Says Delhi band Colossal Figures drummer Rijul Victor explaining the appeal of prog metal, "The whole era of modern metal is the opposite of that rawness that thrash metal had to offer. It [djent] is created flawless and everything is loud."

Delhi-based guitarist-producer Keshav Dhar, who gained fame for his solo project Hydrodjent in 2009 and later launched Skyharbor, and tech/groove metal band Undying Inc., who raised the bar for technical metal in India, have both been extremely influential in turning prog metal into a sound that has been embraced by both artists and audiences alike in Delhi.

Djent - named after the sound of a palmmuted guitar note - and modern prog metal has steadily gained fans for its emphasis on complex technique, squeaky-clean production and a nod toward electronic samples and synth. Adds Victor, who has also produced Delhi progressive heavy metal band Trigger and played drums for prog metal band Guillotine, "It's not just guitars and drums." Adds Amol Vikram Singh, who plays bass for prog metal band Pyramids, whose debut EP Sub Rosa released in October last year, "We weren't looking to stick to any genre." Sub Rosa contains a song called "Fools Errand," which goes into an electrohip hop bridge between hard-hitting riffs.

It wasn't just Indian artists who were making artists and audiences sit up and take notice of the new prog metal wave. In 2010, Swedish prog metal giants Meshuggah toured in India at the Great Indian Rock Concert held across Pune, Delhi and Bengaluru, with close to 2,000 prog fans witnessed the band's debut. Other international prog metal heavyhitters including UK

bands such as Monuments and TesseracT, Swedish djent band Vildhjarta and Animals As Leaders all soon made their way to India.

Although many are happy to write off djent as a trend, there's more to the genre than a formulaic approach. We spoke to six upcoming bands from Delhi and asked them what made them pick prog metal or djent as their subgenre of choice.

Colossal Figures

Who: Formed in 2010 "for the fuck of it," as drummer Rijul Victor points, Colossal Figures went from wannabe rockstars to getting much more serious once they realized they were gaining a following and played headline slots at college festivals across the country. Says Victor, "I joined a bit later. My first gig with Colossal Figures was at [management school] IIM Ahmedabad in 2010 and after that, I thought, 'I like these guys." Although they haven't played in Mumbai or Bengaluru yet, the Delhi band, comprising guitarists Karan Mehta and Saksham Gupta, bassist Karsan Chaudhary and vocalist Govind Marodia, released their debut full-length album Clockwork Dilation

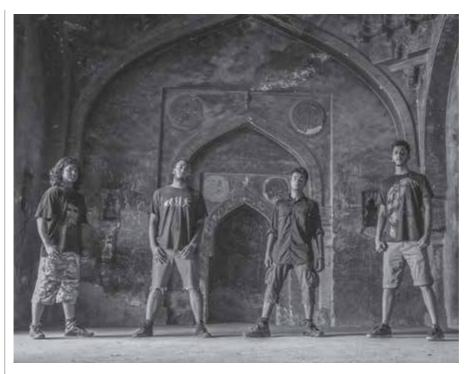
early last year.

Why Djent? Thanks to the ever-growing modern prog metal scene, Victor says anything that has a technical edge to it is often categorized prog metal or djent these days. Says Victor, "It's cooler in our age to play something that's not straightforward." Victor adds that djent was the kind of metal which encouraged clean vocals. "It's not just stuff people would rage to. It talks about heavier, deeper topics and that's not just the usual stuff about politics or society."

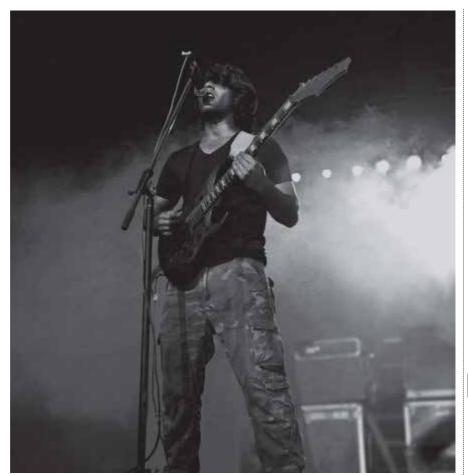
Spin this: "Lost," one of their most memorable moments off Clockwork Dilation.

Define Destiny

Who: Guitarist-producer Karan Singh Braria started off playing for Delhi metal band Jehovah in 2013 and was previously part of experimental metal band Hope In Dark Evolution [H.I.D.E] in 2011. Says Singh, "I made two songs with them but they asked me to cut down on the guitars because the vocalist couldn't keep up." But for the last three years, Singh says he's been writ-



KEEPING TIME Prog heavy metallers Murk Blare released their single "Chronos" last year



WATCHING THE PLANETS Karan Singh Braria aka Define Destiny is working on a concept album about inter-planetary exploration, due later this year.

ing his own solo material, which he recorded and released under the moniker Define Destiny last year with singles such as "Kaizen," "Shandora" and "Insight." Says the guitarist, "I didn't want to compromise any more." The songs are part of his upcoming 10-track concept album, which is a story about a different planet. Although his current releases have been instrumental, Singh says he's recruiting a vocalist to add more melody to the tracks.

Why Dient? Singh, who got into bands such as Meshuggah, Periphery and SikTh after he'd heard the likes of Metallica, Lamb of God and Iron Maiden, says modern prog metal is "pretty flexible." Adds the guitarist, "You can do anything you want. I got bored of Pantera and straight-up heavy music. Djent had everything, from jazz to postrock. As a musician, it's challenging."

Spin this: "Kaizen," a five-minute single which has all the makings of a djent classic without sounding generic, from a clean, delay-laden guitar hook to manic riffage to an electro-inspired outro.

Murk Blare

Who: The Delhi progressive heavy metallers got together in 2012 with one aim -"to keep it [music] as groovy as possible," says vocalist Vipul Verma. And he's not talking about it like a hippie straight out the sixties. "The Tormentor," "The Machine" and their latest track, "Chronos" define the Why Djent? Says Verma with a laugh, "We have fun doing this. We thought, 'Let's make it tough'." The vocalist says he's most inspired by the likes of Randy Blythe [from Lamb of God] and Jon Howard [from Canadian metal band Threat Signal], and he was introduced to djent by Rai. While he says Murk Blare listens to everything from jazz to metal to EDM, he's never wanted to take advantage of the diversity of prog metal and add clean vocals. Says Verma, "I never felt it would fit with our sound. Our new material has become much more technical."

Spin this: Their latest single "Chronos," released in November last year, that churns riff after riff as Verma growls on.

Pyramids

Who: The Delhi prog metal band was formed by school friends and bassist Amol Vikram Singh and guitarist Arnav Puri in 2012. While they've run through their share of lineup changes, Pyramids networked through college and the Delhi metal scene to rope in guitarists Tushar Saxena and Mohit George, vocalist Amir Anwar and drummer Samarth Trehan. They set their band name and 2014 concept EP Sub Rosa [mixed and mastered by Keshav Dhar] after their fascination with conspiracy theories. Says Singh, "The EP is about how the world is controlled by a select group of people. We believe it should be public knowledge."

Why Djent? Singh's idea of the best music needs to check the boxes of technicality and "nice grooves." While he says most people will identify Pyramids as a djent band, he points out that they have varied influences of electronic music as well as metal. Says Singh, "We didn't want to stick to one genre." Like Define Destiny, Singh also first got into metal acts such as Lamb of God, Trivium and As I Lay Dying before coming around to discovering Periphery and Meshuggah. While Pyramids lists three guitarists to chug riffs in their lineup, Singh says that since Mohit George is away studying business in Pune, they're playing with two guitarists at the moment.

Spin this: "Area 51," their grooviest yet, is a great example of the band's evolution from their metalcore roots to odd time signature beats and female vocals courtesy singer Sarina Grewal.









CONSPIRACY THEORISTS

(Clockwise from top left) Pyramids bassist Amol Vikram Singh, Samarth Trehan, Amir Anwar and Arnav Puri recently performed in Delhi at an all-djent gig called Djentle Explosion.



Immoral Values

Who: The instrumental prog metal band started out in 2010 as guitarist Rohan Daniel's solo project. Says Daniel, "I did not begin recruiting [members] because I was writing material for the EP." In the midst of studying production and music at Delhi's Beat Factory Academy and setting up his own studio, Sidechain Audio, Daniel finally roped in neighborhood friends such as drummer Aditya Bali, bassist Dushyant Chaudhary and guitarist Aashish Bhatla. Immoral Values's debut EP *Pixels* released in May 2014, followed by their full-length album, *Default*, in December.

Why Djent? Says Daniel, "The Progressive metal/rock tag keeps me in a safe place, where I can easily progress with the type of music I want to deliver." The guitarist-producer started listening to prog metal and djent in late 2008. Adds Daniel, "When I see bands using a different approach of making and playing songs live, that makes it interesting for me to be indulged in that type of music."

Spin this: Their new album *Default* marks a big improvement for the band compared to their debut *Pixels*, with the addition of members and better production value. The nine-minute mammoth "Jaggarnath" piles polyrhythm upon polyrhythm, incorporating everything from light synth sections, clean guitars to all-out double-bass drumming.

Trigger

Who: In 2012, guitarist Ashwin Ramanathan met vocalist Shourya Malhotra at festival series Great Indian Rock in Delhi and started jamming on covers of bands such as Gojira and Lamb of God. They roped in bassist Paras Khanna and drummer Pallav Sharma and went on to win a band competition at IIM Ahmedabad 2014. They

have just wrapped up their second single "Yakuza" at BlueTree Studios in the city with producer Uddipan Sarmah [from post rock band As We Keep Searching]. Says Ramanathan, "I had luckily carried some MIDI drum parts with me and the competition was in the morning and we recorded in the evening." Plans are now on recording a five-track EP for release this year and return to Ahmedabad for a gig in March.

Why Djent? Like Pyramids, Ramanathan doesn't mind Trigger being classified as djent,

although he prefers the tag of progressive heavy metal, which puts them in the same space as Murk Blare. Ramanathan cites Meshuggah as a major influence and says all members of Trigger are "mad about [Dutch prog metallers] Textures."

Spin this: Trigger only have two singles out – "Everlast" in 2013 and "Yakuza" in 2014 – and it's the latter that aims for that well-produced but raw angst delivered by the band and stickin-your-head use of dissonant riffs.

ANURAG TAGAT



TAKING AIM Progressive heavy metal band Trigger, who made waves with their second single "Yakuza" last year, are working on their five-track debut EP, slated for release this year.

Sting Operation

Ahead of releasing their 18th album and after 50 years of being together, German hard rock band Scorpions feel that it's too early for the band to retire By Anurag Tagat



n 2010, GERMAN HARD rock veterans Scorpions announced a farewell tour that stretched well into three years. By 2013, the band decided it was "too much fun to quit now." While they received a good amount of criticism from fans as well as the likes of Metallica frontman

James Hetfield for not calling it quits after announcing a farewell tour, Scorpions turned around and announced in 2013 that they were working on old and new material for a full-length album.

It's no surprise, then, that their 18th album, *Return To Forever*'s lead single "We Built This House" talks about the band's legacy. Says the band's lead guitarist Mathias Jabs over the phone from Germany, "It's like, the house we built, it's step by step, like Scor-

pions' career. We were not an overnight success. It took a very long time to be at a certain level, and then we were able to maintain that level, of course." Their first album since 2011's *Comeblack*, Jabs says *Return to Forever* features outtakes from as far back as the Eighties. Adds Jabs, "All of a sudden, we started writing new material. It feels like a brand new album, even though it's roughly 50 percent of older songs being finished now and rerecorded, and 50 percent brand new."

In an interview with ROLLING STONE India, Jabs also spoke about how the audience at his shows have got younger and younger and his wish to return to India.

Your first single, "We Built This House," is about the history of the band. What makes bands get to that point in their career where they're talking about things like looking back and legacy and 'making it'? I mean, I guess it's a natural process. When you're together for such a long time, I mean, not everybody in the band is at 50 years [laughs]. Rudolf [Schekner, guitarist] founded the band in 1965, which is amazing. Klaus [Meine, vocalist] joined in 1970 and I joined in '78, which is almost 37 years. It's a very long time. If you are able to stay together and still make creative music after such a long time, I think it's a very good sign. So the new album and the new single, it's about looking back a little bit, of course.

You've said your audience has got younger and younger. What's been the best example of that? Just the faces you see at gigs or any particular incident?

I would say, maybe since six or eight years, we started to notice that we have younger faces in the audience. If it's only once you think it could be accidental, but when it hap-

Scorpions

pens at almost every show, then you notice it and take it seriously. Meanwhile, we know that, due to the fact that we have more than six million Facebook members, we did a little research and found that 80 percent of the six million are between 18 and 28 years old, which for a band of our age is quite amazing. Meanwhile, we can see it in every show. Every continent we play, we have lots of young faces. If somebody's 28 years old, most of the classic songs we're playing in the show are older than the young audience. "Rock You Like A Hurricane" came out in 1984, that's 30 years ago [laughs].

You said that originally 19 tracks were written for Return to Forever and 12 made it to the album and 16 total on the deluxe edition. At this point, is it difficult to let songs go?

M: Yeah, I mean, it's always been the case that you write music and sometimes it doesn't make it to the album for various reasons. I think "Still Loving You," [from Love At First Sting] took seven years until it was released. No one can remember - Rudolf said he already had the song in the early Seventies but we recorded it in 1983. So sometimes it's like a sleeper, the song doesn't really shine, then, when the time is right, all of a sudden, it does.

The new album, it's partly songs from the previous albums, so-called outtakes that we did not finish. And you see, we found some good ideas from the early Eighties, leftovers from the *Blackout* and *Love At First Sting* sessions, and from various periods.

A new album also means that you're going to have to push out a few old songs from the setlist, so how do you worry about doing that? Are there a lot of fights within the band about that?

[laughs] Oh no, but good that you mentioned it. Tonight, we have a production thing, and we also have to make sure what the setlist is going to be, because the crew needs to know. These days, everybody has a multimedia show, like content, movie and pictures and stuff. You're right, some of the ones we've been playing for quite a while, they have to go. But it feels fresh thinking about going on tour again, that we have new songs to play. We've been playing the same material for quite a long time now on this last tour, which took forever. So I'm looking forward to playing the new stuff.

What is your personal favorite from Return To Forever, the one you're looking most forward to, to play live?

I think that "Going Out With A Bang," is one I like very much. "We Built This House," those will be most likely on the new show. I also like "House of Cards," the ballad, which would be very interesting to play. I don't know if we'll put this in the setlist, but I like

"The Scratch" also, because it's like, it has that swinging feel, and it's like a big-band orchestra done with scratch guitars, so for me as a guitar player it's very interesting.

2015 marks 50 years for Scorpions — you have been around for nearly 40 of those years. And it's always been nonstop. Is it going to continue to be that way?

You know, the title Return To Forever, says it all - we don't know. The Scorpions will somehow go on. We don't want to announce like a definite date, like this is the last concert. We keep it open because we don't know. We enjoy playing live and in the studio so much that we notice it's too early for us to finish the career, we just have too much fun. And then the younger audience, and all these as-

"We're not under the same pressure that we've always been throughout our career.



pects just make it worthwhile. So we're looking forward to the upcoming tour, which will go into the summer of 2016 at least. Then we see that if we stay healthy, why not continue? But the good thing is that we don't have to. We're not under the same pressure that we've always been throughout the career. Like, make an album, go on tour, tour the road for two years, go back to the studio, make a new album, it has been like this continuously without a break. So, you know, we still don't take a break, but we don't feel the pressure anymore.

You mentioned in an interview in Germany that one of your unfulfilled dreams was to go on a vacation - has that happened yet? Doesn't seem too difficult.

[laughs] So far, no vacation. It's true, you wonder, but where we are, you have to travel very far in order to find sunshine at the moment, and if you have only one week then you wonder if you should go to... So I'd rather wait until I have time for a real vacation and not just five days, rush into some place and rush back, you know then I'd rather not go at all.

I was watching this movie called The Interview and they used your song "Wind of Change". Have you heard about this or seen the movie?

No, I have no idea.

What is the weirdest place or situation you have heard someone use a Scorpions song?

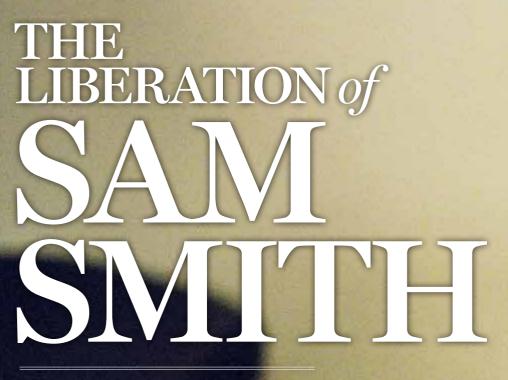
I keep hearing "Rock You Like a Hurricane" in various places. Just by accident, I watched a Tom Cruise movie that I didn't even know about, and all of the sudden it's like, "Rock You like a Hurricane." I saw it on The Simpsons, the same song, and I also saw it in a Microsoft commercial. So it's like, the biggest variation. Lately, they seem to look mgore for famous rock songs than in previous years because we get a lot of offers from all kinds of people, but you don't want to go with commercials about like detergents or something

You're playing a lot of shows across Europe, all the way until next year. Are there any big world tour plans in the works? Have you got any offers to come back to India to play?

It would be lovely if we did come back to India. So far I haven't seen a date, but the agency is just at the beginning of planning the world tour. I know it starts May 1st at China, and then we go Europe, Russia, summer festivals in Europe, the U.S. in September, Germany next year... It goes into next year, so yeah, it would be nice to come back to India. I hope that our agency will be able to book a show in Mumbai. I have great memories of the show in Shillong or Bangalore, or Delhi would be nice. We've been there but we haven't played there.

Any particular India memory that you can recount for me?

Last time I went to Mumbai, I went to a music store, and I bought a sitar, and I tell you, it's difficult to play. I'm still working on it, it's very difficult. Even though I'm a very good guitar player, but the sitar, it's something else. But I have it, and it's a great memory.



He went from London barback to pop's king of pain. Now he can finally smile By Patrick Doyle

E'S HARD TO MISS: A BROAD SIX FEET three, wearing a plush, navy Armani overcoat and trademark silver cross earrings, leaving a faint trail of Bleu de Chanel, which lingers on you if he gives you a hug. "My grandma wore Chanel No. 5 my whole life," he says. "I chose Chanel because of her." It's a clear evening three days before Christmas, and Sam Smith is turning heads in London's posh Knightsbridge neighborhood. He walks a few feet behind his bodyguard, a tall, nononsense bearded guy named Adi, as they proceed down the picturesque Motcomb Street on the way to Smith's hair stylist. "This is my dream street," he says. "The houses are

Photograph by Theo Wenner



SAM SMITH

amazing, everything's clean, very Dickensian. Maybe I'll be able to afford one by Album Four."

As we turn onto a busy commercial street buzzing with last-minute shoppers, Smith gets recognized more. "Are you him?" a man in a suit asks, holding up his iPhone; Smith gives a half nod and shakes his hand. A minute later, a young father approaches: "I know it's cheesy, but it's Christmas – can my son have a picture?" Smith agrees and poses with the bundled-up little boy, before Adi moves things along.

This is one of the few times Smith, 22, has walked around London since becoming, perhaps, the biggest new pop star in the world. "Three months ago, I could walk down here no problem," he says. He stops at the corner of Harrods, the four-and-a-half-acre

luxury depart-

sion about the aftermath of empty sex. "I had a lot of one-night stands," Smith says. "I met a few dodgy friends, people I'm definitely not friends with now." Around the same time, Smith fell in love with a married man. Several of the songs on Smith's debut album, *In the Lonely Hour* – such as "I've Told You Now," about the time he drunkenly spilled his heart to a guy who he thought was leading him on – detail that heartbreak. "I fell in love with a straight guy last year, and he didn't love me back," says Smith. "I got trapped in my own mind."

Lonely Hour has become a Top 10 hit around the world, selling more than 3.5 million copies. This February, he's up for six Grammys, including Best New Artist and Album of the

people can't digest two pop stars who don't look

most sing in falsetto, he can sing in his chest voice, and with power. He's a very, very rare talent."

A

N HOUR LATER, SMITH emerges from the salon, his coif only slightly shorter. We head back to his dream street, taking a seat at a bar outside

under purple, glowing snowflakes, and he orders a lager. Napes, a cheerful 30-year-old in a leather jacket, stops by. He can't stay long; his wife is due to give birth soon. Napes has asked Smith to be the child's godfather, which Smith is taking very seriously. "I'm going to upset so many people with that christening," says Smith.

"Even if there's a show, I'm gonna cancel it. I'm going to make the baby gay."

"I'm going to strap him

Smith calls Adele "my Michael Jackson,"

but bristles at the comparisons: "It annoys me that

ment store that he has been coming to during the holidays since he was a kid. The exterior is lit up like the Golden Nugget, blanketed with Christmas lights and several over-the-top windowfront

displays – a robotic Santa Claus with flying reindeer, futuristic nutcrackers. "Isn't that amazing?" he says, taking it in for

"Not as amazing as your voice!" interjects a middle-aged man in a knit hat who has been eavesdropping. Smith chuckles; as we begin to cross the street, the man adds, "I hear you're putting Adele out of business!"

Smith has been hearing a lot of this lately. He starts walking faster, letting out a nervous laugh: "Did you hear what he said?" Since he broke through last year with the spare anthem "Stay With Me," he's been tagged as the male Adele. It's easy to see why - they're both Brits with great voices who sing about heartbreak and don't look like they were engineered in a Disney lab. Smith calls Adele "my Michael Jackson" - he's been a fan since he was 16 - but says, "We're very different, and I feel like the constant comparisons might piss her off." He adds, "It just annoys me that people can't digest two pop stars singing really personal songs who don't look like normal pop stars."

Just a couple of years ago, Smith was working a few miles away as a barback in the city's financial district, eating customers' leftover fish and chips for dinner. On off nights, he says, he'd sometimes sit at home drinking a bottle of wine to work up the courage to hit the gay bars alone. He wrote about the loneliness of that time in "Stay With Me," a gospel-steeped confes-

fly- Year. Less than three weeks from today, sn't Smith begins his first arena tour, with

sold-out shows from Minnesota to

like normal pop stars."

Madison Square Garden.

He's entered a world he used to dream about as a theater kid growing up in the English countryside. He texts Rihanna. ("I fucking love her.") He sang next to Bono, Seal and Chris Martin at Bob Geldof's recent Band Aid charity session. ("That was surreal... and Seal is so buff.") He was invited to Taylor Swift's 25th birthday party ("She let me hold her Grammy"), where he traded Paris restaurant recommendations with Jay Z and Beyoncé. Tonight, he's a little stressed because he hasn't responded yet to an Elton John e-mail.

Swift, an early fan, remembers inviting Smith onstage at London's O2 Arena early last year. "I'll never forget the moment I was standing onstage at soundcheck waiting for Sam to walk out, and my band and I heard him sing into his mic from the side of the stage in our in-ear monitors," she says. "Everyone just stopped what they were doing and looked at me like, 'Wait a second.' We were all completely stunned that this person sounded even better live than he did on his recordings."

Beyoncé recently told him his voice is "like butter." "Everyone has a breaking point in their voice, which is where it goes from being your chest voice to your falsetto," says Smith's writing partner Jimmy Napes. "But Sam's is so ridiculously high that it's impossible to reach. What to my chest and take him to G-A-Y," Napes jokes.

"That's a gay bar," says Smith. Adds Napes, "If it wasn't obvious."

Soon, more members of Smith's circle start showing up, including his three managers, his 19-year-old sister, Lily, and his roommate Tiffany, a stylish brunette he's known since he was five. Smith and Tiffany have lived together for four years, recently upgrading to an East London apartment, overlooking the Thames, where he likes to take long baths and listen to Lana Del Rey. They don't see each other nearly as much as they used to, like when they'd come back from work, eat chicken wings and watch *Lost*, or the time they dressed up in funny hats to watch the royal wedding on a giant screen in Hyde Park. "We downed a bottle of red wine at five in the morning and were nearly puking," Smith says. "For the majority of the wedding, we were asleep."

Smith and his sister are planning to get tattoos on Christmas Eve with their other sibling, 18-year-old Mabel: a Roman numeral three on their wrists to signify their bond. (Their dad wants one too. "We said no. That kind of ruins it," says Lily. Smith nods.)

Soon, everyone heads into sleek black vans to go to one of London's best Indian restaurants, Gymkhana, in Mayfair, for an unofficial celebration of Smith's big year. "This is like the Last Supper," Smith says, posing for a mock-serious photo as he settles into the center of the table in the private room. He orders an "Ooty Town Gimlet," a very sweet, ginger-and-liqueur drink with rose petals on top – which six

others order after he does. He also orders red wine all around. As Dixieland jazz plays, waiters bring dishes off the sevencourse menu like quail shish kebabs and wild-boar vindaloo.

When Smith goes out on the town, he goes all-out. (Tonight, we'll run up a bill so high his label rep will complain, "I'm

so over my budget. I'm going to get hammered for this.") His iPhone cover-screen photo features an image of him next to a stripper's ass. In June, on the night *Lonely Hour* was released in the U.S., he celebrated with rounds of martinis and tequila, and ended up "flapping around like a fish" on his hotel-room floor while his friends poured Fiji Water on him. "If you watch me on *Letterman* the next day, it looks like a hanging," he says.

Swift remembers sitting with Smith at the American Music Awards in November. "We were front row watching Ariana Grande, loving her performance," she says. "We're both really animated when we're

watching other artists. At the end, she did some dance move that was so sexy and so cool, and at the same time, Sam and I both screamed out, 'Yas, bitch, yas!' and then looked at each other and died laughing. I had this feeling that we'll be friends for life."

Smith has a lot of plans for his U.S. tour.

In Orlando, he says at dinner, he wants to see the Wizarding World of Harry Potter; in Atlanta, he wants to visit Magic City, the famous strip club. ("I actually feel bad for strippers because I'm a bit feminist - I just want to put a jacket on them," he says. "But you can't take things like that too seriously.") They currently have a club named the Skylark booked for the Madison Square Garden afterparty, but he's having second thoughts. "The Boom Boom Room is just so fun. And it's gay! That's where Beyoncé and Solange had the fight. Should we do that, maybe? Let's do that." (They end up sticking with the Skylark.) And he doesn't want to leave Vegas without seeing some pop divas. "It's called the triple threat. You go see Cher, you go see Celine Dion, then you go see Britney."

something pure

about him,'

says Swift.

"Britney's show is so bad," says a member of the group. "It's really depressing."

Smith doesn't care: "Blackout, that's my favorite Britney album. There's still some of her there. She was fighting for some-

thing. Whatever it was, she was fighting for something. I also love *Circus*. I always say to myself, 'If Britney can make it through 2007, you can make it through this.'"

Soon, conversation turns to the Grammys. He went last year, and was bored for most of it. "But during Beyoncé, I was losing my shit," he says. Smith is "100 percent"

The Voice

The Voice

Above: In London, September. Right: With Lorde, Karlie Kloss, Swift and Jessie J (from left) at the '14 AMAs. "There is

sure he'll lose Album of the Year to her this year. His managers balk. "I don't think anyone would call that a proper album," one says.

"She deserves it way more than I do," says Smith, who's been known to sing "Drunk in Love" in the shower and knows all the moves from the video. "I'd be embarrassed if I got it over her. If I got it, I'd give it to her."

MITH GREW UP IN A COZY, 400-year-oldpinkhousewith a swimming pool in Great Chishill, a tiny village near Cambridge. His mother was a trader for Tullett Prebon, a major brokerage firm listed on the London Stock Exchange. He notes with pride that his great-aunts were some of the first female bankers in Lon-

don. The family took lots of vacations: trips to Abu Dhabi to visit his mother's friends, as well as Spain and Italy. ("I used to love Tuscany as a kid so much," Smith says.) His dad, a part-time personal trainer, stayed home to raise the kids. "I've had such a feminine influence in my life," Smith tells me the next day. "My mom and my sis-

ters are very strong women. My best friends are all girls. I think I've got a bit more woman in me."

When Smith was nine, his parents bought him a secondhand amp and a mic. While his dad cooked dinner, Sam would sit on the living room sofa, singing hits by John Legend, Norah Jones, Britney and Beyoncé over backing tracks. Sometimes, when his parents hosted dinner parties, at the end of the night they'd call on Sam to perform. "My mom and dad would have a bit to drink and be like, 'Sing a song!'" he says. "But every time I explain that, it sounds like

they were pushy - they weren't." By then, he was in vocal training with a professional jazz singer and getting acting roles like the lead in a children's version of *The Rocky Horror Show*. ("It was talk of the town," says his roommate Tiffany.)

Sam's parents found a theater coach who helped him graduate to London's West End, where he sang at children's showcases

and in the chorus of musicals like *South Pacific*. "It was my first taste of everything, being in a dressing room, having people say, 'Well done,'" he says. "I was really addicted to that feeling."

Around the age of 13, a schoolmate asked him if he was gay. "I turned 'round, and I was just like, 'Yeah,' "says Smith. "And everything changed." Smith says his classmates were generally accepting, and his childhood was happy roughly "80 percent of the time." As a young teen, he wrote a "really intense" love letter to a popular, artistic kid two grades above him. The student turned out to be straight, but he wrote a long, thoughtful letter back, saying he only saw Smith as a friend. "It makes me emotional, actually," Smith says, his eyes clouding up. "He looked out for me for the rest of school. He just made sure that if anyone took the piss out of me, he would stick up

This is for my mother, from the older brother of your children, me.

phone to my ear:

Glad you found your lover, 'cause it wasn't our father who made you laugh and happy.

It's been a long five years, I've cried 1,000 tears, and here we are after the war.

But we're so much better now, the skies are clearer now.

"Do you like it?" he asks, turning it off after the first chorus. "It's very deep. I've only played it for my family. They cried every single time I played it."

The day before, Smith had called the divorce "the loveliest split-up of

all time." But today, he says, "I said that to convince myself. That's what I did from Day One, you know? We pretend like we're OK, but it did affect us."

At 18, Smith moved to London and started working at the financialdistrict bar. He recorded a now-prophetic song called "Little Sailor" ("Will-

ing to do anything if I write a hit song/And I'll ride this tide/I'll put some makeup on"), which he sent to Elvin Smith, a singer he'd seen open for Adele. The song never took off, but Elvin became Smith's manager and arranged for Sam to write with Napes, a songwriting buddy with few credits. "It sounded like the voice of an angel on this recording," says Napes. "And it was even better in the room. I couldn't believe it." Together they wrote "Lay Me Down," the real-life story about the death of an acquaintance's grandfather; his widow had a heart attack at his funeral and died within days. It wound up in the hands of the dance-pop duo Disclosure. "We assumed it was a girl, because of how high his voice was," says Disclosure's Howard Lawrence. They recruited Smith to sing "Latch," an upbeat, unconventional rave-up with jazz chords. Smith was working in the bar the day it started getting radio airplay. "We both tuned in and listened to it play on the radio for the first time on the

for me. He could have made it hell for me, you know?"

Some did make it hell for him. Once, he borrowed another student's eraser and watched the kid wash it off afterward. "He was like, 'I don't want to share my eraser with a gay man,'" Smith says. He pauses for a moment. "Prick. I hope he's reading this." Another time, as he was walking through town with his dad, someone drove by and yelled "faggot." "I was just embarrassed that my dad had to see that, because

I could only imagine how you feel as a parent. You just want to kill them. I was always embarrassed for the people around me. It never actually deeply affected me. You just ignore it, you know?" Ironically, the worst incident happened after he moved out of his small hometown: Soon after arriving in London, he was attacked while walking around in makeup. "I got punched in my neck, just out of nowhere," Smith says. "It wasn't the easiest."

Smith was a devoted Lady Gaga fan. When he was 17, he faked a note to his teachers, saying he was sick so he could get in line for Gaga's Monster Ball at the O2 Arena. "I was front row,

fully Gaga'd up!" he says. Unfortunately, he left the fake note open on a school computer and ended up with three days of detention and big trouble at home. "I'd do it again in a heartbeat," he says. "Without Gaga, I wouldn't be here right now." Today, Gaga says that knowing she inspired Smith is "one of the most powerful experiences I've had as an artist. I was Sam. I still am Sam in a lot of ways."

Smith came out publicly in an interview last summer. It's perhaps a sign of progress that the announcement was met with little fanfare. Smith's matter-of-fact approach to his sexuality has received some criticism from within the gay community, however: In August, Gawker published an essay titled sam smith's fucked-up gay conser-VATISM, where the author took issue with several of Smith's statements, including his criticism of dating apps like Grindr and Tinder, and quotes like, "I had to be careful [coming out] - I want my music to be sung by absolutely everyone." "[Smith's] philosophy is, in short, to be gay, but not too gay," said the writer.

"There was no depth to those comments at all," says Smith. "I'm a romantic. I feel like with Grindr and Tinder, you just lose a bit of romance. You're swiping someone's face to the left. The guys I've fallen in love with aren't the most beautiful people you've ever seen. I would've swiped them.

"I don't know what I'm trying to do, but I am trying to do something, you know?" he adds. "I'm trying to change something for the gay community. I've always said this: I want to be a singer. I don't want to have to be a *gay* singer, because I am a gay singer, do you know what I mean? Do you speak about being straight every single day of your life?"

SAM SMITH

Smith's family life began to fray in his teens. In late 2008, when he was 16, his mother lost her job. Shortly thereafter, a *Daily Mail* piece appeared with the headline CITY BANKER IS 'SACKED



Samland

Top: With
younger sisters
Lily (left) and
Mabel. Right:
With former
flame Jonathan
Zeizel, a dancer,
last year.

FOR SPENDING TOO MUCH TIME ON SON'S POP DREAM.' The article reported allegations that his mother, Kate Cassidy, lost her £500,000-per-year job for "gross misconduct" because she used the company's "time and resources" to promote her son's career. "It is not true, 100 percent," Smith says. His mother disputed her dismissal in court. "My mom still gets upset about that now. She gets really upset about it, because it affects her

finding work."

Not long after, things got worse when the entire family took a weeklong vacation to New York. On the first day, they were walking under the Brooklyn Bridge when one of his sisters started crying; she had just seen her father texting another woman. That day, their parents told them they were getting divorced. "We had no choice but to go for walks through Central Park and talk about it," Smith says. "My sisters would cry. I would cry. We all dealt with it suddenly."

phone together," says Lawrence. The song entered the U.K. charts in October 2012 and spent months in the Top 40. "It took off in a way that we never, ever could've expected," he says.

Most of *In the Lonely Hour* was recorded in two weeks, roughly one song a day, in a converted Victorian school in upscale St. John's Wood – the same studio where Adele happened to record her debut album. (Smith also worked with two of Adele's co-writers, Eg White and Fraser T. Smith.)

One day at Napes' basement studio during a writing session, he and Sam were out of ideas. They went out for pizza with songwriting partner William Phillips and ended up having a frank conversation about Smith's sex life. "I was really taken aback," says Napes. "He was like, 'Let's just go there,' and then we did." The

cial K. "I hate when things are messy," says Andrea, his cheerful personal assistant, picking up a candy wrapper and placing it in the trash while Smith does vocal exercises in the bathroom. Soon, Smith is looking over his relatively modest new tour wardrobe: five identical black button-down shirts with white collars he describes as "quite priest-y." There's also a lone all-white shirt. "I look a little too Michael Bublé in this one," he says.

The tour starts tomorrow, and Smith had only a week to rehearse before the holidays. "I'm scared shitless, actually," he says. "I'm doing an arena tour, basically, with one album. And it's only 35 minutes long!" He's filling out the show by extending some songs, adding songs

representative says that the two are no longer together.)

At soundcheck the next day, Smith looks nervous. He paces the stage in a gray T-shirt and hoodie, his cheeks a little red, tapping his index finger on his mic repeatedly. He asks that the house lights be dimmed, and he looks irritated when it takes a couple of minutes. There is a false start to "Like I Can," and then the band forgets the new intro to "La La La." "You haven't done that yet?" Smith asks them testily. A crew member at the sound-board assures Smith that they have, and it's cued up.

Smith retreats backstage for a two-hour nap and catches up on a couple of episodes of *The Real Housewives of Atlanta*.

When we speak in his dressing room, he's fretting about the crowd. "It's seated, so I really

"I want to be a singer," he says.

"I don't want to have to be a gay singer, do you know

three wrote "Stay With Me," recording it just a few hours later, laying down simple drum, piano and organ tracks.

Napes recalls ordering Smith to stand in various parts of the studio at different distances from

the microphone, singing the chorus' harmonies over and over. "I had him running around, and he basically created a choir out of his own voice," says Napes. "When we pushed PLAY and all those vocals came in in the chorus, that's when we all knew this was magical. I've never experienced anything like that before. It was just such a moment."

The label tried to take the song "down other avenues, sending it to many, many people," Napes says. "But we just kept coming back to that same day. We'd always say, 'Let's try to beat the demo.' And what ended up being on the record was the demo."

Smith's U.S. breakthrough came in March, when he scored a *Saturday Night Live* booking – a rare feat for a relative unknown. "When I watched his performance on *SNL*, I knew how powerful his gift was," says Lady Gaga. "I was with my boyfriend, about to leave for tour again the next day, and Sam was singing 'Stay With Me.' We both had such an honest emotional reaction. I remember thinking how unique it was to have such a visceral reaction to a modern artist."

ACKSTAGE AT ATLANTA'S
Fox Theatre, Smith's luggage sits open in the middle of the room, under a rumpled dress shirt, near a snack table stocked with Cheez-Its and Spe-

what I mean? Do you have to speak about being

straight every day of your life?"

from his earlier EP and a cover of "My Funny Valentine."

He tells a member of the crew to make sure no one goes out drinking. "I want everyone on the ball," Smith says. No Magic City tonight. The night before, his team opted for an early bar-food dinner that sabotaged his current cayenne-pepperjuice regimen. "It wasn't great, actually," he says. "I just want to lose weight for the Grammys, if I'm honest." Smith just returned from an Australian vacation, where photographers caught him shirtless on the beach. "That fucking shot, I dreaded it," he says. "I'm just very body-conscious. Sometimes I'm really proud that I don't look like other pop stars. But there's also moments where I'm like, 'Ugh, I wish I had abs

For most of the vacation, he was joined by Jonathan Zeizel, a dancer Smith met on the set of his "Like I Can" video late last year. "He's amazing. A really kind guy, and he's very talented. He's the most amazing dancer. He's just very sweet." On the trip, they stayed with local pop star Ricki-Lee, went dancing until six in the morning, and went skinny-dipping. ("Afterward, we were like, 'Maybe we shouldn't have done that, because there's sharks.'")

Smith downplays his relationship with Zeizel. "I've allowed someone to stay in my bed more than, like, three times, which is the first time that's happened in a long time." (A couple of weeks later, a label

hope they stand up," he says.

They do, from the moment Smith hits the stage, backlit, from behind a screen. Swift had it right: Unlike so many pop singers who strain to sound like their records in concert, Smith's voice seems bigger, almost cruelly effortless. The audience, a mix of selfie-taking girls and dressed-up couples on date night, seems to know every song. They swoon at the end of "My Funny Valentine," when Smith holds a rich a cappella note for what seems like forever. Before "I've Told You Now," he tells the story of the night he got drunk and confessed his feelings to his straight crush. "Has anyone ever been in love with someone who doesn't love them back?" he asks, and the crowd roars. The room goes silent when he performs "Lay Me Down" over only a piano. Afterward, the entire audience stands, cheering, for more than a minute. He steps back to take it in for a while, smiling.

A half-hour later, between two meetand-greets, Smith takes a seat in a hard chair on a tile floor. "That was incredible," he says. "I'm a bit relieved. It felt more powerful. Last year, we left our shows going, 'Do you like it?' But we left tonight going, 'You have to have liked that.'"

Smith pauses for a few seconds, remembering that last moment onstage. "I literally thought in my head, 'I am really happy. Yeah, I am really happy right now."

GIRLHOOD

A look back at India's pioneering women rockers By Sidharth Bhatia



URING THE HEY DAYS of rock in the West, a number of bands had women in their ranks. The tradition of females in music was an old one, from jazz to singers like Doris Day and Sarah Vaughn. None of the all-girl

pop or rock bands reached the heights of the Beatles or the Rolling Stones, though individual singers, such as Janis Joplin, Joni Mitchell and Joan Baez – in some ways more folk than hard rock – became famous on their own steam. Stevie Nicks [Fleetwood Mac] and Mama Cass Elliot [Mamas and Papas] were among those who were integral parts of popular groups. The ultimate rock chick was of course Suzi Quatro, she of the leather top and pants.

In the early days of rock & roll in India, the restaurants were full of female crooners in Calcutta and Bombay and each had their own appeal. Pam Crain, Eve, Lorna were all popular with the dinner and dance crowd and Usha Iyer [later, Uthup] became a star in her own right. But none of them joined pop bands or even set up one of their own.

In the mid 1960s, Delhi saw the emergence of the Andrews Sisters, all from one musically minded family—Sunita played bass and rhythm, Suman sang and Sunila played the drums. Then there were the girls from Lady Sriram College who got together with a friend and set up the Mixed Ups, whose repertoire contained light hearted stuff like the songs of Herman's Hermits.

In Bombay, around the same time, the Pop-pets, four school girls well trained in music and harmony, began singing at local restaurants. Their leader was Frances Correa, a classical pianist and singer, whose father Alex Correa played in his brother Mickey's famous band, which was a big draw in the Taj Mahal Hotel. The Pop-pets, all turned out smartly in identical dresses, haircuts and knee length socks, like well appointed schoolgirls, used to open for the main act of the night, a cabaret, at the Natraj hotel on Marine Drive.

Folk singers like Devika Rajbans and Maya Sami were well known on the campus circuit in the 1970s. Some bands had female members, such as Farida Lalan, a guitarist in Riot Squad of Bombay, Radha Shottam of Human Bondage who had trained in Hindustani classical and Kittu Vaz, daughter of the famous Chic Chocolate, the Bombay trumpeter, who sang in various bands. Most of these faded away once their bands dispersed, except Radha [now Radha Thomas], who runs her own jazz band in Bangalore.

But unarguably, the biggest female star of western popular music India ever produced has to be Asha Puthli. A Bombay born and bred girl, Puthli began singing early on in Bombay's restaurants, but used to do it with her back to the crowds to hide her identity. She was afraid her parents would not approve and soon enough she was sent off to Baroda to study home science, to prepare her for eventual marriage. She shocked conservative Baroda with her bohemian lifestyle and returned to Bombay to join a British airline-her objective was to earn enough money to move to the US to learn dance from Martha Graham. In between, she provided voice for the Bombay band Savages and later recorded for the Singapore group October Cherries.

In 1970, Asha went to the States and joined Martha Graham's school but did not last long. She then did odd jobs while knocking on the doors of recording companies. At most places, she was met with incredulity—an Indian girl wanting to sing jazz? One suggested she go back, another asked if she would change her name to Ann Powers. A recording offer came her way, from the avant garde producer Peter Ivers, but the record disappeared into cold storage and was only released in 2009. Another, with Ornette Coleman, called *All My Life*, shows her voice bending skills. But talent scouts were not convinced.

Asha became part of the New York jet set, hanging out with the likes of Andy Warhol and Merchant Ivory, but the recording companies were not taking her on.

Eventually, Asha moved to Europe, where she cut a few discs and acted in a couple of movies, including the Italian B-grade film *Squadra Anti-Gangster*. Her work at the time sounds futuristic and a forerunner of what was to come in music — clearly she was ahead of her time and some of her songs have been sampled by the likes of American rapper Jay-Z.

Indian rock groups occupied a small niche in India's musical scene and the women were an even tinier part of it. But, they were pioneers, breaking new ground at a time when India had a closed economy and opportunities were few and far between. For that, they deserve our tribute.

Asha's Thing

We caught up with vocalist Asha Puthli, who was in India recently, and found that her voice still is a perfect instrument for singing

HE FIRST THING ASHA
Puthli says when we
meet is, "Can you help
me get a Padma Shri?"
I should have been
thrown off balance by
such an opening, except that Ms. Puthli's
penchant for the dramatic and the spectac-

ular is well known. At least it was to me. I have heard her sing on a few occasions, including at the iconic Jazz Yatra 1978. For her fabulous talent and versatility, it is a sad commentary that she did not become some sort of a legend as a vocalist. When you consider that in the early 1970s, Asha's cause was championed by John Hammond in New York [Hammond was a legendary figure in the American jazz firmament and 'discovered' Billie Holliday among others], Willis Conover, whom every Indian jazz listener of a certain age owes his or her introduction to jazz through the extremely popular radio show The Voice of America Jazz Hour, and the legendary American jazz pianist Duke Ellington, it is baffling to see that this lady never became a jazz superstar with a large body of work. Her story is worth recounting.

Where did you learn about jazz singing? You grew up in Bombay...

Easy. You're ahead of the game. I grew up in Matunga in a street popularly called "Hollywood lane," so named because many Hindi film people lived there. We lived in the same building as [Actor] Prithviraj Kapoor. We called him Papaji. [Actor] Madan Puri, [Singer] K.L.Saigal and his family and other movie families were our neighbors. Daboo [Actor Randhir Kapoor] and his sisters were my playmates. One day Papaji heard me singing in my balcony and thought I had a voice for films. Of course, my family were opposed to any kind of a movie career.

As a teenager, I went to the morning and afternoon sessions of music at local restaurants — Venice, Ali Baba and others, hearing wonderful, happy popular Western music and jazz. I learnt a few of the songs and frequently sang with the bands though always with my back to the audience!

Miles Davis too would sometimes play with his back to the audience. Was that your inspiration?

No. I turned my back because I was not part of the band, just a guest. No other attitude!

Was your talent spotted?

Writer Ved Mehta heard me and wrote about me in his book. Later, this helped my career in New York.

How was that?

Niru Jhaveri of Jazz India had asked me to speak to and audition for the great talent scout John Hammond when I went to New York. I had gone there to study dance with Martha Graham and tried very hard to reach Mr.Hammond but it was impossible to get past his secretary even on the phone. Fortunately, Ved Mehta was in New York and when he heard of my problem, he



spoke to the right people to get me to meet John Hammond.

How did he react to your recorded tape?

He shut his eyes and contorted his face when he heard my tape. I thought he was having a heart attack. At the end of the recording he said, "Marvellous". He christened the piece, "Asha's Thing." I was asked to go to a recording studio and meet [American saxophonist] Ornette Coleman for a recording. That was some experience! It went very well. Unknown to me two music critics, one from Rolling Stone and the other from Downbeat were present at the recording. [Later, Asha won the Downbeat poll (1972) for a vocalist most deserving recognition.] However, when the Ornette session was taken to Columbia Records, the big boss was

cynical. "Forget it. If it is jazz, it won't sell. We have to market it some other way."

I believe you also had some experience with gospel singing....

I had also been given an introduction to Rev. John Gensel in New York. I went on one occasion to his church for the evening vespers — a gospel session — and sang that day. A lady in the church came to me and said, "I'd like you to meet my brother who has a band". This "brother" happened to be Duke Ellington!

What happened next?

He said he'd like me to sing something. I had no idea about what to sing and couldn't recall any of the Duke's music but I sang a few lines... Duke accompanied me on the piano! He liked what he heard and asked if I'd like to tour with his band for a couple of months. I had to decline, not having a working visa in the US.

Turning down the Duke! That was something. Did you ever resolve this visa impasse?

Oh yes I did. Walking into the Museum of Modern Art in New York, I had a strikingly good looking guy hold the door open for me. As I walked in he asked, "Can I do something for you?". I said, "Yes, you can marry me!" And he said, "Yes, I'd like that. I've waited all my life for you".

Wow! You must have dazzled him too ...

I was dressed like a pillow case... in a mirror work top and a long *angarakha*. Anyway, that marriage got me my working papers! He was gay and we had our own lives. Even today, I am dearly fond of him, although we divorced a long time ago.

But you never went back to Duke... No I didn't.

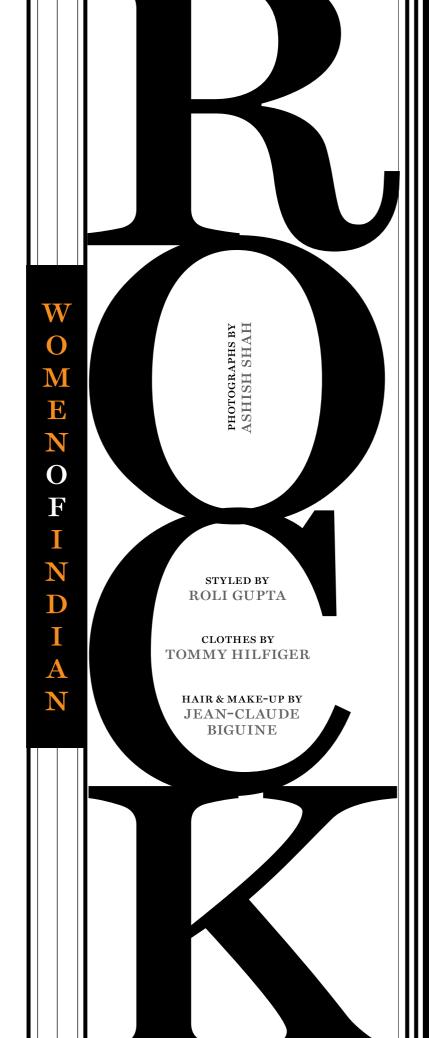
What about your recordings and gigs?

Apart from singing in a couple of Jazz Yatras in Mumbai in the late Seventies and Eighties, I appeared on TV a few times. One time in London, I was waiting in the green room with Cliff Richard to make my appearance on *The Russell Harty Show*, Cliff was making some rude and sarcastic remarks about India and I didn't much care for him. I recorded a couple of R&B albums with [American musician] Peter Ivers, which did well at that time. We recorded "Ain't that peculiar," which was on the charts. One of those albums was released only about three years ago! It was lying in the cans in some studio for many years.

Do you think of yourself as a jazz singer?

I did at one point but now I think I have evolved to be more than that. I've sung in many bands in many contexts so I am not just a jazz singer. Spirituality and sensuality define my music.

SUNIL SAMPAT



CELEBRATING FEMALE ARTISTS FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY WHO HAVE BEEN ROCKING THE BLUES, JAZZ, SOUL AND ELECTRONICA

omen have been leading bands in India since the 1960s. However, the Nineties represented a watershed for Indian alternative music with music labels such as Magnasound and Saregama ushering in a genre called Indipop [refers to Indian pop and not to be confused with indie or independent music] and promoting artists such as Alisha Chinai and Suneeta Rao. Tracks such as "Paree Hoon Main" and "Made In India" remain etched in memory, not just because of they were irresistible pop jams, but also because of the high airplay they received on the MTV, which had just launched in India [in 1996].

The Noughties had no use for a bare-chested Milind Soman or a music video. Female artists took over the stage with killer hooks and explosive performances. When they were off stage, some of them ruled the internet with lofi, yet deftly produced recordings. Shazneen Arethna is one of the first names that pops up when we recall Noughties bands which stood out. Arethna supported Mumbai pop rock band Zero, and went solo, and continues to perform with some of the best musicians in the country.

Vocalist **Anushka Manchanda**, who is working on an exciting new solo electro project, Jayashree Singh, who founded and leads Kolkata experimental band PINKNOISE, singer and songwriter of Mumbai electro rock band Monica Dogra, vocalist Saba Azad of Mumbai funk/ nu-disco band, Samara Chopra who leads New Delhi ska band The Ska Vengers and also has goes by the solo artist name, Begum X, Sanaya Ardeshir who launched her solo electronica project Sandunes, jazz vocalist Sonia Saigal, Suman Sridhar of the genre defying Sridhar/Thayil band, who has been performing as a solo artist recently, Suyasha Sengupta who fronts Kolkata pop rock band The Ganesh Talkies, Tanvi **Rao** who is part of the two-member trip hop electronica group Sulk Station, Tipriti Kharbangar of Shillong blues band Soulmate, Vasuda Sharma who composes and sings in Hindi and English, jazz vocalist Vasundhara Vidalur and jazz/pop/rock vocalist Vivienne Pocha have all made it to our cover story this month.

We asked them for stories and each piece here is an honest woman-to-woman take on each other.



WOMEN of INDIAN Rock





WOMEN of INDIAN Rock

00000

MONICA DOGRA

By SHVASHA SENGUPTA

chanced upon Shaa'ir+Func's video
"Oops" as a teenager. I saw it on
television one day and it was impossible for me to get the song
out of my head for weeks after
that. My knowledge of the independent music scene in India was
rather limited back then and I remember
being smitten by Monica Dogra because she
seemed so effortlessly cool, and even more so
because she was bringing something so new
to the table, exploring a space which no Indian frontwoman had ventured into before.

Women can be strong and still be sexy, they don't always have to be doe-eyed and coy. When you're watching her on stage, you are charmed by her fierceness and also her ability to be so graceful at the same time. It's not easy being a woman in a scene, which is primarily dominated by men. You tend to either suppress your feminine energy completely or you overuse it and sexualize yourself, sell yourself as a sex object. Monica Dogra finds the balance between the two so well and that's such an admirable quality to have

I got to see two very different sides of her as an artist at last year's NH7 Weekender in Kolkata and though it will take me a little more time to warm up to her aesthetics for her solo project, she proved on the second day of the festival with Shaa'ir+Func why she is still my favorite. She simply owns the stage and her audience, every time!

The Ganesh Talkies participated in a competition organized by Converse in 2012 for which she was one of the judges. It was nervewracking for me to play my songs in front of someone who I have looked up to. I feel embarrassed now thinking of how tonguetied and awkward we were around her because, well, you know, Monica Dogra is not just another woman, she is a goddess!

All clothes by Tommy Hilfiger from Spring Summer 2015. Necklace, pendant, chain and palm cuffs all by Kichu



WOMEN of INDIAN Rock

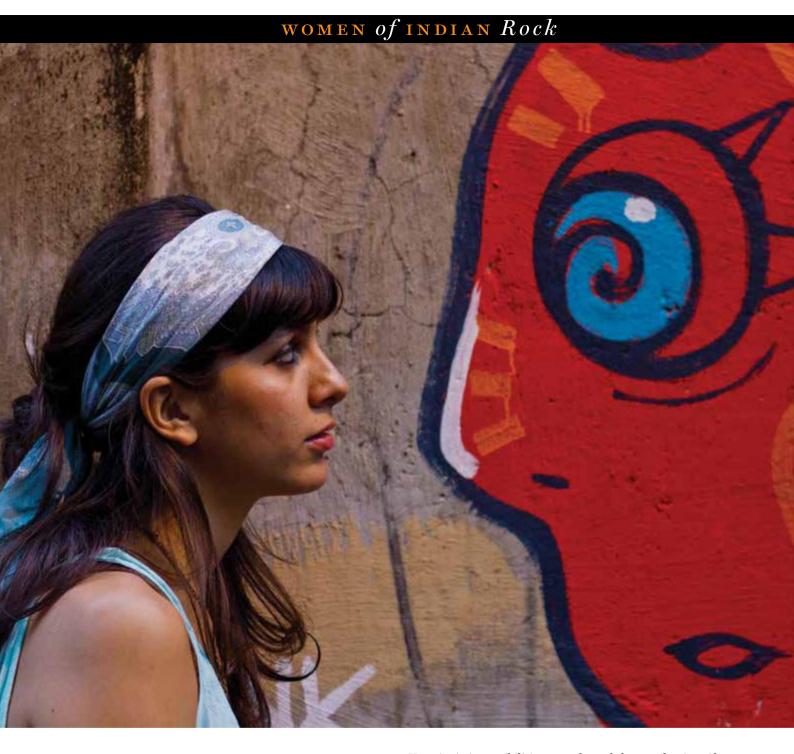


JAYASHREE SINGH

By Suman Sridhar

y adoration for this creature cannot be summed up by anything short of "I want to be Jay Singh when I grow up!" The sheer brilliance of her phrasing conjures up the imperceptible depths of our histories, identities and lives as post-colonial bacchas. We might otherwise be orphans in a jungle without the goddess leading us in an oft-merry dance of the diaspora — PINKNOISE's new album has held my hand and stolen my heart. Jayashree Singh offers us priceless nuggets of humour, folly and the indomitable courage of experimentation. The voice of 'Kasturi Amma' indeed summons me to an "old bad new good" place I can call home. Yes, "nothing old will do", only the ever-lasting and ever-changing Jayashree Singh.





SANAYA ARDESHIR

By Tanvi Rao

have been drifting away from electronic music for a while now, what with watching kids listening to EDM at 7 am on the school bus (I teach in a school) to the build up-drop template that seems to be everywhere.

"Slybounce" by Sandunes is one of the few exceptions. "Slybounce" is just one of Sanaya's many tracks that have been crafted with meaning and intent, something that is rare nowadays especially in the electronic music spectrum. From the funk/jazz chords to the 2step/garage inspired beats, her music is danceable and relatable.

Her pianistic sensibilities seep through her production. She strings together samples, percussive elements and synths, creating music with strong melodic ideas that flows seamlessly. Her music is club-friendly yet honest – a tough nut to crack. Her approach to making music is not formulaic/template based – something dance music often struggles with. The fact that she has a strong musical background and has been part of various live acts has probably helped her in making electronic music that is not mechanical. More importantly, she has managed to create a synth-driven signature sound that cuts through her diverse output.

I know out of experience that it's very difficult to take an electronic project live. And she is probably one of the few people in the country who has done it successfully. We have shared stages quite a bit over the last couple of years. As a performer, she's confident and calm. As a person she is extremely down to earth and warm.

ANAGHA MAAREESHA

TANVI RAO

By Sanaya Ardeshir

y first impressions of Tanvi Rao were formed when I caught her performance in Bonobo, Bombay as part of Sulk Station.

The duo played a late afternoon set and I remember being impressed watching how the performance drew people inside and into a cosy huddle on the ground in front of the stage. It was a hot afternoon being the middle of Bombay summer and the air was still inside, but no one seemed to mind. When she began speaking - I remember thinking, 'Wow, how real!' Her communication with the audience was one coming from a place of no pretence. She admitted that she had nerves, and that she was happy to be there - and it was particularly refreshing and also rather endearing to witness her performance on vocals and keys.

Since then, I've had the opportunity to perform alongside Sulk Station on several occasions and learnt more about their style and approach. I've watched Tanvi collaborate with other musicians and even dancers, and always felt engaged by her performances by the virtue of her ability to be and project true self on stage and off — something that can be quite a challenge in the world of performing arts, and she does a damn good job of it! Big up, Tanvi!



VASUNDHARA VIDALUR

By Vasuda Sharma

he first time I heard the name Vasundhara [from Adil & Vasundhara] was from a friend. My friend was like "Oh my god, you have to hear her voice." I already liked the name Vasundhara because it is similar to mine and has the same meaning. When I saw one of their live performance videos on YouTube, I was completely blown away and became an instant fan of her voice. So smooth, flawless, sensual and powerful.

She has an amazing control over her voice and is so effortless. I used to follow Adil and Vasundhara's jazz songs and was later thrilled to know that they were finally working on an album. I always wanted to catch their live performance, but somehow happened to miss it.

I got an opportunity to watch Vasundhara play live for the first time in JD Awards in 2014 I think. She has an amazing stage presence, perfect pitch and poise. Easily one of my favourite voices in the country.

I also got to meet her in person there briefly and complimented her too. It broke my heart to hear Adil and Vasundhara part as a duo. But I wish people get to hear more and more of her voice in the coming time. We need it Ohandsheisveryprettytoo, which is abonus. [And I am straight].





SUYASHA SENGUPTA

t 23, Kolkata pop rock band The Ganesh Talkies' Suyasha Sengupta is one of the youngest vocalists in the scene. Whether it's a club show or a festival set, Suyasha commands attention. She's remarkably self-assured on stage and even if her band is reinventing Bollywood sounds, she's got powerhouse vocals, which add gravitas to songs like "Item Song." We're all batting for Suyasha, who is more likely to lead a protest with songs like "Fight Club" than just be serenading boys, which is what "Item Song" is all about, by the way.

ASHIN JAGGER (VASUNDHARA VIDALUR); NAMAN SARAIYA (SUYASHA SENGUPTA)





VIVIENNE POCHA

By Merlin D'Souza

ivienne has a commendable voice. It has an international quality to it. It is rocky and bluesy at the same time. With her range, she is a great soprano singer. She is a well-rounded, consummate performer. She interacts with the audience and the musicians and always shares a great rapport with the crowd. She also gives a lot of freedom to the musicians on stage. Most of the singers stick to a certain structure. But that is not the case with her.

We have worked and performed together a lot. Vivienne is always open to ideas. Like I said before, she gives a lot of freedom to those who work with her. Although music is disciplined and certain rules have to be adhered, she likes to explore new things. She has always put a lot of faith in me and trusts me with the ideas that I come up with.

A few years back, we performed a blues, rock and jazz set at Razzberry Rhinoceros at Juhu Hotel. She was with her guitar and I was playing the piano and we had a huge group of musicians. We mostly performed covers, with a few originals in between and it was certainly a memorable performance. I feel we bring out the best in each other. Every time one does well, the other is also very happy.

MERLIN D'SOUZA IS A MUMBAI-BASED JAZZ PIANIST





SONIA SAIGAL

By Vivienne Pocha

admire her style. What I find with her is that she's very individualistic in her approach to music, so am I. I've done a show with her at Blue Frog. It was a blues and soul show. She is not apologetic about what she wants to present as a musician. She's got this amazing smoky voice and a gift for interpreting sound. She is one of the most talented singers I've seen in India.



AFTER 30 YEARS OF PROVOCATION, A FIERY MADONNA EXPLAINS WHY SHE ISN'T NEARLY DONE PUSHING LIMITS By Brian Hiatt

HE'S COMING OUT," A CHOREOGRAPHER SAYS OVER A P.A. SYSTEM, sounding tense. "Everyone get your horns and masks on." A couple of nights before the Grammys, 22 shirtless, flawlessly fit male dancers, each equipped with a bejeweled face mask and hazardous-looking black bull's horns, line up on a rehearsal-studio stage within Sony Pictures' Culver City lot, awaiting inspection. Madonna struts out of a dressing room far across the studio, dressed in a matador outfit, sans pants. Trailed by a hairstylist and a makeup artist, she spends at least 30 seconds eyeing each dancer, probing for tiny imperfections in the fit of their leather costumes and



masks. "I don't want oil on their bodies," she notes. "I had the same problem on the video. You can use body moisturizer."

Twenty-eight choral singers, most of them less finely sculpted specimens, assemble by the nearby bleachers. Madonna gives them even more individual attention. On their red robes is a logo from her new album, Rebel Heart - a detail even HD cameras will never pick up. She asks the ones who wear glasses if they can take them off: suggests hairstyles and, occasionally, cuts ("The nice thing about hair is that it grows back"); critiques beards and sideburns; and in one woman's case, reaches out and begins braiding curls herself.

All of this work is for five minutes' worth of TV time, the debut performance of her new single, the deep-house-inflected "Living for Love." In keeping with the lyric "Love's gonna lift me up," it ends with a prone Madonna soaring 15 feet into the air via a harness. It's a lovely image, though as she hovers tonight she breaks the spell by asking, "Are my boobs coming out of my costume?"

In between takes, two small children come up to the stage. They're both nine years old – the boy, David, is in crisp white linen; the girl, Mercy, is wearing a blue sweater and skirt, a sparkly bow in her hair. "Hi, Mom," they say, in unison, and Madonna smiles, offering

son, and Madonna smiles, offering a hand for her youngest kids to kiss.

As the downtime stretches on for a few more seconds, she begins to lose patience. "Are we having a break right now?" Madonna asks into her microphone. "Or can we go? I have things I need to do."

Four days later, Madonna is back in her home on Manhattan's Upper East Side. There's a lot of impressive art just in the second-floor sitting room, including a Léger above the fireplace and Frida Kahlo's "Mi Nacimiento" resting casually on a stack of books. Family pictures going back to Madonna's childhood are on a glass end table, and sheet music from Mercy's lessons sits on the piano in the corner. There's a highly eclectic collection of books on the shelves, from art tomes to Hubert Selby Jr.'s Last Exit to Brooklyn to a biography of the late John F. Kennedy Jr., a rumored paramour.

More books are neatly stacked on the cream-colored coffee table, which precisely matches the couch – *Gay New York*, Luc Sante's *Low Life*, Curtis Sittenfeld's novel *Sisterland*. Alongside them is a set of black binders filled with photographs – references for a movie she plans to direct, based

Women my age have accepted they're not allowed to behave a certain way. I never followed rules. I'm not going to start now. 9

on the 2013 novel *The Impossible Lives of Greta Wells*.

Also on the coffee table are my twin digital recorders. Madonna reaches down and lines them up more evenly. "I have OCD," she says, brightly. She asks for my zodiac sign. The answer – Taurus – seems acceptable. "Strong-willed people," she says. "They don't like to change. But very loyal."

I laugh a little, then find myself assuring Madonna that I'm not sneering at astrology. "Oh, OK, good," she says. "You can't be a human being and laugh at it. Because it's a science, it really is. I mean, obviously there's a lot of charlatans. In general, and in specific."

Thanks to an overnight flight, not to mention decades of insomnia, Madonna is exhausted. "I was doing yoga earlier," she says, settling onto her couch. She's wearing a black, high-necked Dolce & Gabbana blouse and matching skirt, with Prada boots. There's a small cross around her neck, a gold grille on her teeth and a Jacob the Jeweler watch on her wrist. "And I literally fell asleep in corpse pose. But you know, yoga is a preparation for death. Yogis get to a point where they can literally slow their heartbeats down.

And then as they get older, they go into the woods, and they sit in their loincloth or whatever it is, and they choose to stop their heart. Anyway, that's what yoga's all about. It's not about twisting yourself into a pretzel. It's about preparing for death. Detachment from desire. What a great way to start an interview!"

I was struck by your extraordinary attention to detail – going over each singer, each dancer. What is that all about for you?

I've always been that way, and then it's just developed over the years, as I've done more things – especially film directing. I really want to see everything. If it's around me and it's part of my show, I need to be a part of all of it. From the creation of the music, to the surface of the floor, to everyone's hairstyle, to the details with the buttons and the bows and the snaps and the zippers. All of those things! I don't know where it started, but I think it's just gotten worse [laughs].

Or better.

Or better, yeah. Because I do think that those details matter.

When you're making a new album, how do you deal with the pressure of living up to your past work?

I don't think about my old stuff. I just move forward. I mean, it's funny, because when I work with people, they're referencing other

things. Diplo kept wanting to play, like, the bass line for "Vogue" or something from "La Isla Bonita" over and over again. I'm like, "OK, let's move on." I forget about stuff. I don't feel like I have to live up to anything. I'm just thinking about what I want to write about.

At the same time, the new song "Veni Vidi Vici" is very self-referential, even dropping old song titles.

Yeah, because every once in a while, it is good to look back and tell a story about how a girl from Detroit came to New York.

I mean, it is an amazing story. Are you able to recognize it now?

[Softly] It's crazy, what's happened in my life and what I've been through. If I really think about it, I've had an amazing life. And I've met so many amazing people. I saw [Like a Prayer producer] Nile Rodgers at the Grammys, and I just gave him the longest, biggest hug. I feel like I've survived so much, and been through so much. And sometimes I miss the innocence of those times. Life was different. New York was different. The music business was different. I miss the simplicity of it, the naiveté of everyone around me.





Some people are very invested in the idea of "Who's the Queen of Pop?" Is that a crown you're interested in?

Well, I do think of myself as a queen, but I don't think I'm the only queen. There's room for other queens. We reign over different kingdoms.

Lady Gaga told Howard Stern that there's a perception out there that she was going for your crown. "I don't want her fucking throne," she said.

I don't think she wants my crown, either. We live in a world where people like to pit women against each other. And this is why I love the idea of embracing other females who are doing what I'm doing. It's important for us to support each other. The only time I ever criticized Lady Gaga was when I felt like she blatantly ripped off one of my songs. It's got nothing to do with "she's taking my crown" or "she's in some space of mine." She has her thing. I do think she's a very talented singer and songwriter. It was just that one issue. And everybody's obviously run with it and turned it into a huge feud, which I think is really boring, quite frankly. And you know what? I don't care anymore. Here's the

thing: One day, everyone's going to just shut up about it. You'll see! I have a plan.

Do you keep journals? Do you write poetry that no one reads?

Yeah, both. Actually, one of my assistants just found one of my journals from 1991. I'm complaining the same way about not being able to sleep in 1991 as I am right now. Like, some things never change. So that was, in a way, reassuring.

You were saying the same thing in the Eighties. When did the insomnia start?

Unconsciously, probably when my mother died. And sleep's never been an easy thing for me.

So do you live on three hours of sleep a night?

If I can get six hours, I can get through the day. But because I want to have a career and also be an attentive mother, I tend to take a lot of breaks and deal with my kids, and then go back to work. In the recording studio, I never finish before 2 a.m., and then I have to get up at 7 a.m. for my kids. So there's a lot of sleep deprivation.

Maybe you're an advertisement for never sleeping.

You start to go crazy if you don't sleep. But I definitely don't understand people who sleep 12 hours a day. I see that as the supreme indulgence, people sleeping until noon. How dare they? I never did that when I was a teenager....

But you've always had goals. You had...

A fire lit under my ass? Yeah, that's true. No time to waste.

Some people don't have as much of a driving purpose.

I guess so. Well, I can't relate to those people.

Did you see the movie "Whiplash"?

I did, I loved it. I totally connected to it and related to it. I watched it with all my kids, and they were all very mesmerized by it, and I think a little bit speechless afterward. My son David was the most vocal about it, because he's just the most vocal of all my children. Doesn't have any agendas. Isn't going through adolescence. He said, "Wow, I want to make my hands bleed." When the character said, "I'd rather be a 34-year-old genius who did something with his life, dead of a heroin overdose, than live to be 93 and do nothing," I totally was like, "Yes." That really resonated with me. Not, you know, the...

Not the self-destructive part.

No, no. But believing in yourself and being willing to do anything, to walk through the fire, to do what it is that you want to do. Getting out of that car accident covered with blood to play the gig... I mean, that's me. That's just me.

But you never had a coach quite like J.K. Simmons' character, I would imagine.

I've had teachers like that, for sure.

There was a dance teacher in high school, Christopher Flynn, who was very important in your life. Was he anything like that?

Oh, yeah. He was brutal. He was ruthless, and he walked around with a stick and he hit you with it. He would say kind of outrageous things: "Don't come to my room and stand like that. Get out of here." He would not tolerate laziness or complaining. He did a lot of things like that guy in the movie. But when you did some-

thing right, he did feed you compliments, once in a while. He's the one who said to me, "You have to get out of this place. You have a gift. Go to New York."

If you had never gone to that class, would your path have been completely different?

Well, things would be very different if lots of other things didn't happen to me. If my mother didn't die and I grew up with a feeling of wholeness and completeness and family, I probably would have stayed in Michigan and become a schoolteacher. And I was very blessed to have the teachers that I had. My art teacher, my English-literature teacher, and my Russian-history teacher were also key in the guiding of my artistic soul. I went through this whole phase where I wanted to be Georgia O'Keeffe. And one day my art teacher came over to me, and she, like, hit me over the head with this rolled-up piece of paper - all my teachers hit me! - and she's like, "You're terrible! You're never going to be an artist. You're a showgirl, get

They were kind of my mother figures, as well. Christopher, my ballet teacher, was the first gay man that I met – well, that I knew was gay. He snuck me out when I was in high school to my first gay club, and opened my eyes to a whole world. Not just gay culture, but also just the idea that you could be different.

The "rebel heart" that you sing about, that instinct in you - where do you think it came from?

Being a troublemaker? [Laughs] Just growing up in what I considered to be a provincial, suburban, narrow-minded environment. Feeling like I didn't fit in, feeling ostracized. So if people didn't accept me at school, I just would push things even further. I thought, "Well, you already don't like me. So fuck you, I'm going to go even further. How do you like these hairy armpits?" It was just in my DNA. And I didn't have a mother. That probably had a lot to do with it, because it wasn't like my mother was saying, "You shouldn't behave that way." I had a father, I had older brothers. I did have a stepmother, but I didn't have any relationship with her. So there was no role model for me.

You also saw that your brothers were given freedoms you didn't have.

Yeah. My father was very strict with me, and I kept seeing a disparity between their freedom and my lack of it, or how I had all the responsibilities and they had none. And the Catholic Church, all of the rules, and why did I have to wear a dress when they could wear pants? I would say to my dad,

There was a time when I was less provocative when I was married. My ex was not a fan of me kissing Britney Spears onstage. 99

"Will Jesus love me less if I wear pants? Am I going to hell?" I wanted to know why people follow rules blindly, or why girls had to act a certain way and boys didn't. Why could boys ask girls out and girls not ask guys out? Why did girls have to shave their legs and guys didn't? Why did society, like, set everything up the way they did? My whole adolescence was full of unanswered whys. Because they never got answered, I just kept lighting fires everywhere – metaphorically speaking.

And then as soon as you were in the public eye...

Well, that just continued. Because then I was in the public arena of "Why?" Because then it was like, "Oh, you're dressing like a slut or a whore, so you must be stupid." Or "You're promoting sexuality, so you're a whore and you're just doing this for attention. You have no talent." Again, I was like, "Why? Why can I not be sexual and be intelligent? Why can't I strut around onstage like Mick Jagger and not be pigeonholed as a bimbo? Why?" Again.

Or Prince, at the same time. Exactly. Thank you, yes.

You responded the same way you did in high school: "You don't like how I'm dressing - how about this? How about this book?"

Same thing. Yeah. My nature is to provoke, that's true. I can't help myself. But it's always with good intentions.

In your 2005 documentary "I'm Going to Tell You a Secret," you called your old self "an idiot," which seems pretty harsh.

Well, there's a lot of idiotic things about my old self *and* my new self. I mean, one's always being an idiot, let's face it.

Have you embraced your old self a little more since then?

Yeah, maybe. Now I don't even remember why I called myself an idiot. I can be very harshly critical of myself. It depends on my mood, and obviously it depends on where I am in my life. Yes, embracing myself – I'm working on that [laughs].

Aren't we all?

Aren't we all. Exactly. Well, some people aren't. Yeah. Some people are medicating themselves all the time so that they don't have to embrace themselves. If you can't feel, you can't embrace.

Do you still enjoy provocation? Even now?

Um, yeah [laughs]. Would you like me to provoke you? I mean, you're not asking that question because you don't know the answer, right?

Well, there was a time when you were talking as if you'd left that in the past.

Really? Did I say that? I think there probably was a time when I was less provocative. That's when I was married. Yeah.

I didn't make that linkage.

Yeah, make that linkage [laughs].

What was it about that marriage that made you feel that way?

Well, I don't think my ex-husband approved of it. Or maybe he didn't understand it. I don't think he understood my provocation. He was not a fan of me kissing Britney Spears onstage, for instance. Was that provocative? I think it was. I mean, now it wouldn't be.

On some level, he must have known whom he was marrying.

Yeah, but I think all of us make the mistake of thinking we're going to change people when we get together. But we're not. People are who they are. And people change in their own time, you know?

During that marriage, you were drinking beer for a while, which is hard to nicture

[Laughs] I was, because, you know, when in Rome. And when I lived in England I was embracing all things English,

and I went to pubs a lot. If you go to a pub, you better learn to appreciate ale.

How do you balance your own rebelliousness with being a mother who's trying to get kids...

To do their homework? Well, I say, "You want to change the world? You want to be somebody?" Rocco looks up to people like Bob Marley. My son David looks up to Michael Jackson. And I say, "Being educated is a big part of being a rebel." And also discipline, starting a project and finishing through to the end, is key to making somenot. You don't have to be a pop star to feel connected to destruction or self-de-

There's songs on this new record that are

struction. But self-destruction is self-obsession, and self-obsession is not really possible if you're engaged in raising children. And if you have a spiritual life, you're constantly being asked to see yourself as one small fragment in the bigger picture. Also, the idea of service to humanity, putting yourself in situations where people have much less than you do, puts life in perspective.



thing out of your life.

That's a good argument. Does it work?

It does work. And then, of course, the other weapon is, "There are kids all over the world who are dving to go to school, who cannot, and here you are complaining about it. Shut up and go to school." They go with me to Africa and they see kids going to a school that I built and see how grateful they are to walk to school in their bare feet and sit in a two-room building on very basic chairs and desks. And they see how grateful they are to learn, and it puts everything in check for them.

Years ago, you were asked what kind of mom you thought you would be, and you said, "Very affectionate, but probably domineering.

What does "domineering" mean, though? Like, bossy? What mother isn't? I mean, I'm very involved in their lives and very opinionated. But my daughter just went to college, and that's a lesson in letting go. I can no longer dominate her. She gets to do what she wants to do, and that has helped me become less domineering.

Unlike a lot of other creative people, you seem to lack a self-destructive impulse.

Everyone has a self-destructive nature in them. It's whether you feed it or spiritual and searching, and other songs that are basically about fucking.

You just said a bad word! Are they about that? I don't know. Maybe you shouldn't take them so literally.

Fair enough.

Would you like to be specific?

Well, there's the song "S.E.X.," for one, and "Holy Water," which is about oral sex.

But whenever I write about sex, I always do it tongue-in-cheek. That's the one thing that people misunderstand grossly about me. "Holy Water" is obviously meant to be funny.

And you do have introspective and sexual songs next to each other on the album, which is interesting.

Originally, I wanted to have two records one was going to be all of my envelope-pushing, mischief-making, provocative music. And then there was going to be the more romantic side of me, the more vulnerable side of me.

You're showing that you can be spiritually ascendant and also kind of...

Interested in sex?

Yeah, I guess. But also able to sing about $it\ and\ be...$

And why not? But once again, I'm defying the convention that you can't be both, or that you have to be one personality trait. There's no law that says that you cannot be a spiritual person and a sexual person. In fact, if you have the right consciousness, sex is like a prayer. It can be a divine experience. So why do they have to be disassociated with one another?

If it's one theme that you and Prince, once again, have in common, it's that sometime intermingling of...

Sexuality and...

Spirituality, yeah. "Like a Prayer" - was that a deliberate reference just now?

Nope, as I said it, I was like, "Oh, I just referenced one of my songs. How perfect." I've had a teacher I've studied Kabbalah with for years, and we have discussions about sex. I also wanted to understand the Koran, and I was studying Islam with an Islamic scholar. And in the Old Testament, in the Koran, sex is not a bad thing. There are certain religious groups who have turned it into a sinful act. I've always tried to open people's minds to the idea that it's not something to be ashamed of.

You took a lot of flak for moving the culture to where it is now, for things that no longer seem shocking.

Well, think about how crazy everybody went when Truth or Dare came out, and now everybody has a reality show, and nobody thinks twice about it. And I got so much shit for my Sex book, and no one gives Kim Kardashian a hard time. It's so crazy. So I guess I had to be the scapegoat.

To what extent would you characterize yourself as Jewish? Would that be a good label?

[Laughs] No, I don't affiliate myself with any specific religious group. I connect to different ritualistic aspects of different belief systems, and I see the connecting thread between all religious beliefs. I have not converted to Judaism. I've studied Kabbalah, as you know, for many years, so there are a lot of things I do that one would associate with practicing Judaism. I hear the Torah every Saturday. I observe Shabbat. I say certain prayers. My son was bar mitzvahed. So this appears like I'm Jewish, but these rituals are connected to what I describe as the Tree of Life consciousness and have more to do with the idea of being an Israelite, not Jewish. The tribes of Israel existed before the religion of Judaism existed, so you have to do your history.... So, am I Jewish? I mean, some people would say, well, you do a lot of things that Jews do, but I would say I do a lot of things that people did before Judaism existed. And I believe what I practice has to do with something deeper than religion, that it embodies all religions, including Judaism. And Christianity. And Islam.

Well, you're wearing a cross.

I like crosses. I'm sentimental about Jesus on the cross. Jesus was a Jew, and also I believe he was a catalyst, and I think he offended people because his message was to love your neighbor

as yourself; in other words, no one is better than somebody else. He embraced all people, whether it was a beggar on the street or a prostitute, and he admonished a group of Jews who were not observing the precepts of the Torah. So he rattled a lot of people's cages.

A rebel heart, you might say. He was a rebel heart for sure.

What do you make of Kanye West, who co-produced three of your new songs?

He's a brilliant madman. He can't help himself. Like, he doesn't have the same filters other people have. He has to blurt things out - he's always saying inappropriate stuff. But he also has brilliant ideas in the studio, if you can get him to pay attention long enough. He would come and go. He would drive me bonkers, because he's got so many things going on in his life. And this seemed to be the theme of my record, working with people who can't get off their phone, can't stop tweeting, can't focus and finish a song. It drove me crazy. I was, like, running around with a butterfly net. But I feel like the music business needs him, because everyone's become so politically correct, so safe. I don't always agree with the things he says or does - I don't always like his music, even. But he's a beautiful mess. I love him.

Do you see yourself in him at all, or an earlier version of yourself?

Not really.

You never jumped on stages.

Well, I think he takes award shows too seriously. I never got too engaged with who wins awards or not, because I don't honestly think it's that important. So that part of him I can't relate to. Like, what's the point of fighting for somebody to... like, "This person should have got it"? Don't come to an award show looking for justice!

You hung out with Taylor Swift at the Grammys – it occurred to me that by being sort of the anti-Madonna, she might be most like you. Your bellybutton was a big deal in the Eighties, and her thing was never showing hers.

On purpose? I wasn't aware of that. She has an opinion, and she's going against the norm. So in that respect, she is similar to me, yeah. And also, people just want to give her a hard time all the time because they think she's a goody-two-shoes, so of course I want to embrace her.

In some ways, any young female pop star can be seen as a sort of funhouse-mirror version of you. How do you process all that in your head?

There's a part of me that feels jealous, like, "Oh, it's so much easier now to be famous," or "It's so much easier to get your stuff out there." But on the other hand, it's also harder, because you don't get a chance to find out who you are as a performer without a huge audience. In my coming-of-age time, there was no Internet, no social net-

working, nothing. It was just show after show, hoping one day somebody would notice you. All of that time you put in develops you, and you're doing it anonymously. And that's really helpful, not only to your growth as an artist but also to your psyche, to your confidence about who you are. To be judged and be picked apart by the public when you're 18 years old, I don't envy those girls. It's too much.

On the flip side, it seems one of the only acceptable prejudices in pop writing, and in the world at large, is ageism.

It's the last great frontier, you know? We've fought the civil rights movement, we fought for gay rights. There's so much political correctness, where people would never dream of thinking of judging somebody because they're gay or because they're black or because they're Muslim or whatever. But it's still the one area where you can totally discriminate against somebody and talk shit, because of their age. Only females, though.

"Kanye takes awards too seriously. Don't come to award shows looking for justice!"

Not males. So in that respect, we still live in a very sexist society.

People tend to admire the physical efforts of Jagger and Springsteen – but it's different for you. That could be seen as a blatant double standard.

Yes, it's extremely blatant.

So do you just ignore it? How do you deal with it?

I don't ignore it. I take note. I think, "That's interesting." No one would dare to say a degrading remark on Instagram about someone being black or gay, but my age? Anybody and everybody would say something degrading to me. And I always think to myself, "What's the difference between that and racism, or any discrimination? They're judging me by my age. Why is that acceptable?" I don't understand. I'm trying to get my head around it. Because women, generally, when they reach a certain age, have accepted that they're not allowed to behave a certain way. But I don't follow the rules. I never did, and I'm not going to start.

So when, for example, your ass is out on the red carpet – is that deliberately flaunting the idea of what someone...

Yeah. "This is what a 56-year-old ass looks like, motherfuckers."

Well, I mean, that's what yours looks like. Perhaps not the average...

Well, you know what? It could be the average one day. That's the thing. When I did my Sex book, it wasn't the average. When I performed "Like a Virgin" on the MTV Awards and my dress went up and my ass was showing, it was considered a total scandal. It was never the average, and now it's the average. When I did Truth or Dare and the cameras followed me around, it was not the average. So if I have to be the person who opens the door for women to believe and understand and embrace the idea that they can be sexual and look good and be as relevant in their fifties or their sixties as they were in their twenties, then so be it.

In the lyrics of "Joan of Arc," you say, "Each time they take a photograph/I lose a part I can't get back," which sounds more like Sean Penn's old attitude to the press.

There are certain mystical belief systems that believe that taking pictures takes an aspect of the soul, but beyond that it's just the idea that once you're captured in a photograph, then a million presumptions are made of you, and you are forever frozen in that one moment, and you are perceived to be the embodiment of that moment, and that, of course, is an illusion.

And sometimes that moment ends up talking back to you, like in "Birdman," I guess.

Yes. [Laughs] Exactly. It's a paradox. I love being photographed, or I should say I love the art of photography. It's about people taking photographs of you, stealing them, and then presuming or assuming or captioning. Words can never be taken back, photographs can never be taken back, nothing can ever be taken back.

Do you think about mortality?

In some respects I will never die. Because art is immortal. What we leave behind and what we create – the energy that we put out into the world is eternal. The physical body is assembled just like a chair or a building or a flower, but the revolutions we start, the people we affect and inspire, that is eternal. So, in that respect, we do achieve immortality, and that makes me less fearful.

What do you want the next five or 10 years of your life to look like?

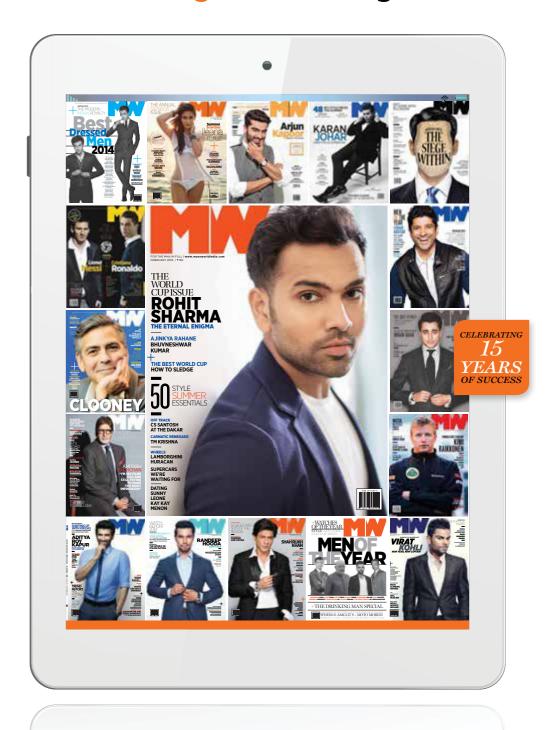
I want to keep growing and living life to the fullest for as long as I'm on this planet. I don't have a specific plan. I want to be a good mother, I want my children to thrive, I want to continue to grow as an artist. And I hope I will always have the ability to create art and live in a world where I can speak freely, and I can inspire people. I don't know what form that will take.

Are you open to falling in love again? Definitely. Yeah.

That was a fast answer.

I don't doubt love for a second. I'm living for love, baby. Come on, listen to my songs!

India's original men's magazine



download your digital issue now Available on: iPad, iPhone, iPod touch and Android devices

Dualist Inquiry Sahej Bakshi on his

Sahej Bakshi on his personal style and love for clothes

producer Sahej Bakshi aka Dualist Inquiry recently joined the likes of American pop rock band HAIM and Brit rockers The Vaccines as the face of Levi's 501 CT global ad campaign. Taking time off from music, he spoke to Rolling Stone India about his sense of style and his wardrobe

Describe to us your personal style

I tend to love clothes that exhibit a degree of attention to detail. I consider my style to be minimalistic yet fussy, in the sense I'll spend hours in a store trying to find the perfect fitting solid color t-shirt or pair of jeans.

What according to you is the essence of a man's style, especially musicians.

I think with men's style, less is more, and the magic is in the details.

Are you conscious of what you wear when in concert?

I have two distinct modes of clothing in my daily life, at home and when I am out. When I'm at home, I chill in pajamas and loose tees, it's super comfortable. Any time I step out of the house though, it's my usual ensemble of black jeans, t-shirt, watch, etc. Whether it's for a concert or a coffee with an old friend, I'll dress the same way. I do tend to save my favorite tees for my big concerts though.

What does your wardrobe look like?

I'm guilty of owning a walk-in closet to hold all my clothes, though the truth is that most of the time I rely on a few tees and a couple of pairs of jeans. I think I've been most indulgent when it comes to shoes, jackets and watches. I have about 20-25 of each.

What is the most expensive piece of clothing you own?

A gorgeous leather jacket from the Levi's Made & Crafted line. It's a slim fit biker jacket and you can really feel the expertise and attention to detail that went into making it.

You have recently become the face of the Levi's 501 CT in India. How does it





feel like to be the only musician from India to be a part of a global advertising campaign?

It's a great privilege to be chosen to be part of this campaign. Levi's choice to bring musicians and artists from all over the world for the 501 CT reflects the diversity and versatility of this product. I'm really happy to represent our growing indie music scene in India in this global campaign.

How were you chosen?

I'm not sure of the decision-making process that went into Levi's, but from my end, I received an early-stage inquiry asking if I'd be interested in working with Levi's. Of course, my answer was a massive yes, and before I knew it, everything was locked in place and I was on my way to shoot for the campaign in New York.

When did you first start wearing Levi's?

When I was eight or nine years old. I think Levi's weren't widely available in India at the time, so I bought my first pair when I visited New York with my parents in 1996. Because I was growing so fast those days, they bought me a pair that was six inches longer than it needed to be. So I wore them rolled up at the cuffs for the first year or so.

Who are your style icons?

I don't actually have any style icons in particular, since I've never paid that much attention to my dressing style. I just piece together what feels good to me, and my tastes change a bit every year or so.

What do you have to say about how Indian musicians dress in concert.

It's hard to generalize, to be honest. Some individuals dress up and do it really well, some try too hard and get it wrong, and a lot of musicians I know don't think about it at all.

Give us your three rules of style.

Don't try too hard; don't follow trends if they don't suit you; dress for the mood you're in.

What does a typical day in your life look like?

There are two typical kinds of days for me: at home or on the road. When I'm at home, I wake up nice and early to get some quiet time in the studio before everyone else wakes up. I keep rotating between my home studio, living room and kitchen, making music, playing some video games or fixing myself some snacks. In the evenings, I go work out when I feel like, and on a typical evening I'll probably have some friends over for dinner and drinks. When I'm on tour though, it's a completely different story. It's more like flight, taxi, sound check, gig, sleep, repeat.

Stuff.tv/in

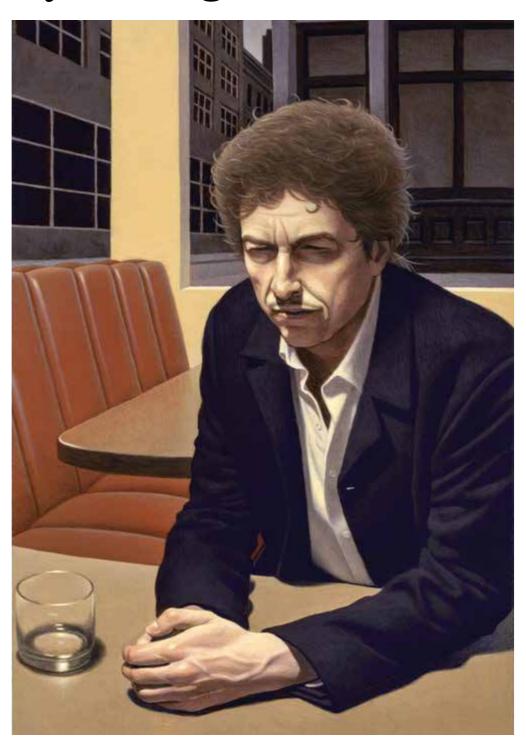
Live. Now. www.stuff.tv/in



GAMES......PG. 86

RS PLAYLIST PG. 94

Dylan Digs Into a Deeper Blues



Covering romantic pop songs once sung by Sinatra, he finds a new way into rock history



Bob Dylan

Shadows in the Night Columbia

BY DAVID FRICKE

As an encore at almost every show on his North American tour last fall, Bob Dylan performed an unlikely ballad: "Stay With Me," recorded by Frank Sinatra on a 1964 single and written for a 1963 film, The Cardinal, about a young priest who ascends to a post in the Vatican. Sinatra cut the song, a prayer for guidance, as if from on high, in orchestration as grand as papal robes. On this quietly provocative and compelling album, Dylan enters the words and melody - as he did onstage - like a supplicant, in a tiptoe baritone through streaks of pedal steel guitar that suggest the chapel-like quiet of a last-chance saloon. But Dylan's need is immediate, even carnal, and he pleads his case with a survivor's force, in a deep, shockingly clear voice that sounds like rebirth in itself. In stripping the song to pure, robust confession, Dylan turns "Stay With Me" into the most fundamental of Great American Songs: a blues.

Dylan transforms everything on *Shadows in the Night* – 10 slow-dance covers, mostly romantic standards from the pre-rock era of American popular songwriting – into a

barely-there noir of bowed bass and throaty shivers of electric guitar. There are occasional dusky flourishes of brass (the moaning curtain of horns in "The Night We Called It a Day"), but the most prominent voice, other than Dylan's, is his steel guitarist Donny Herron's plaintive cries of Hawaiian and West Texas sorrow. Sinatra is a connecting presence: He recorded all of these songs, and Dylan made Shadows at the Capitol Records studio in Los Angeles where Sinatra did his immortal work for that label. Sinatra even co-wrote the first song, "I'm a Fool to Want You," in 1951. When Dylan crawls uphill through the line "To share a kiss that the devil has known," it is easy to hear Sinatra's thentumultuous romance with Ava Gardner - along with echoes of the wounded desire Dylan left all over *Blood on the Tracks*.

Yet Shadows in the Night is less a tribute to Sinatra than a belated successor to Dylan's 1992 and '93 LPs of solo folk and blues covers, Good as I Been to You and World Gone Wrong: a spare, restorative turn to voices that have, in some way, always been present in his own. "Autumn Leaves" and Irving Berlin's "What'll I Do" are the kind of ladies' choices Dylan surely played with his Fifties bands at school dances. "That Lucky Old Sun" (Number One for Frankie Laine in 1949) turned up in Dylan's early-Nineties set lists, but that's no surprise: Its nearsuicidal resignation is not far from that of Blind Willie McTell's "Broke Down Engine," on World Gone Wrong, or Dylan's own "Love Sick," on 1997's Time Out of Mind.

The great shock here, then, is Dylan's singing. Dylan's focus and his diction, after years of drowning in sandpaper, evoke his late-Sixties poise and clarity on John Wesley Harding and Nashville Skyline - also records of deceptive restraint and retrospect - with an eccentric rhythmic patience in the way he holds words and notes across the faint suggestions of tempo. It is not crooning. It is suspense: Dylan, at 73, keeping fate at arm's length as he looks for new lessons, nuance and solace in well-told tales.



Björk Finds the **Beauty in a World of Pain**

The Icelandic art-pop gueen charts the breaking of a heart on a devastatingly direct album

Björk Vulnicura One Little Indian ★★★★



Björk's 2011 Biophilia addressed the universe, from molecular to cosmic levels, and was presented in elaborate formats, including an interactive app. Her latest couldn't be simpler: a breakup album, that most common pop coin. But with Björk, even

simplicity is intricate business. Arranged for voice with orchestral strings and electronic beats, *Vulnicura* is a unified set of nine dark, swarming, melodically distended songs. There is clearly some autobiography here about her relationship with artist/co-parent Matthew Barney. But whatever informed it, this may be the most heart-rending music she's ever made.

The first six songs chart the before-and-after arc of a crisis, pivoting on the 10-minute "Black Lake." It's the set's most devastating number, unfurling in slow-mo, with knife-twist lyrics ("Your heart is hollow") and droning gaps that read like

choked emotions. Electronic prodigies Arca and

"Black Lake," "Atom Dance"

the Haxan Cloak add production touches here and there; "Atom Dance" is a digitally distressed duet with Antony, recalling the break between human and computer in 2001: A Space Odyssey. But this is primarily the sound of a woman alone, riven yet indomitable. When, on "Black Lake," she declares she is a "Rocket/ Returning home," trilling her r's, it's a scarred triumph. WILL HERMES



Neel and the Lightbulbs

Rewind Self-released

* * * 1/2

Kolkata composer talks sex, politics and being broke

"We have exercised our voting rights as a right to make another mistake," blares Kolkata composer, guitarist and producer Neel Adhikari on the opening track of his debut album, "Big Mistake." The jibe at West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee is part of a wide range of topics Adhikari covers on his album. The composer shares credits with the Lightbulbs - featuring guitarist Ronodeep Bose, Roheet Mukherjee [from pop rockers The Ganesh Talkies] and drummer Avinash Chordia [from rock 'n roll band The Supersonics 7. Adhikari shines when he's quirky with lyrics - whether it's about being yourself ["Universe"] or getting caught in the act ["Of Mice and Men"]. ANLIDAG TAGAT



Scorpions

Return To Forever Sony Music India German hard rockers stick to the formula in their fifth decade

With the title Return to Forever alluding to the German hard rock/heavy metallers' quelling all rumors of calling it quits, the tracks feature outtakes from around three decades ago, plus new material. It's difficult to tell whether any of them were written recently. From the hard-hitting opener "Going Out With A Bang" to the acoustic ballad "House of Cards," Scorpions hit a high with their nostalgia-driven "We Built This House," and heavier, groovier tracks like "Catch Your Luck and Play," swing-rocking on "The Scratch." They haven't lost their sting but the venom's not really potent, unless you're older than their 1984 hit "Rock You Like a Hurricane."



George Ezra

Wanted on Voyage Columbia

★★★¹/₂

A rising U.K. star makes old sounds feel new on his debut

A chart-topping smash in the U.K., this English singer-songwriter's debut LP is a post-Spotify wonder, triangulating herkyjerky indie rock, the rustic strum of Lumineers-style folk and the blue-eved R&B of his tourmate Sam Smith. George Ezra's sound is omnivorous, and his swagger is decidedly modern, but the 21-year-old star has the deep and smoky voice of an old train-hopping troubadour. A fan of Woody Guthrie and Lead Belly, he writes simple lyrics that could exist comfortably in any era: "I've been told your new playmate's successful, and he's handsome, and he's charming/It's a damn good job he isn't here, or I may have wound up harming your darling," he sings on "Leaving It Up to You."

CHRISTOPHER R. WEINGARTEN



José González

Vestiges ♂ Claws Mute ★★★
Swedish folkie unfurls his
gentle beauty, very slowly

Swedish singer-songwriter José González's new album - which is just the third LP from the 36-year-old artist, in a 12-year solo career - sticks to the formula that has served him well in the past. Intricate fingerpicking backs up his soft vocals; melodies flow without urgency; vague but evocative lyrics drift to the surface. González's lyrics focus on aging and the inevitability of loss. "All of this will be gone someday," goes the refrain on the yearning "Afterglow." The album's best track, the fragile meditation "Open Book," is its last - which makes perfect sense coming from someone whose subtle, carefully crafted music delivers rewards to listeners who know how to wait SOPHIE WEINER



A Feminist Folk Revival for the 21st Century

T Bone Burnett's favorite new singer reanimates rootsmusic history on her self-assured debut

Rhiannon Giddens Tomorrow Is My Turn Nonesuch★★★1/2



Over the past two years, Rhiannon Giddens has become one of the most promising voices in American roots music. The frontwoman for adventurous string-band trio the Carolina Chocolate Drops, she's taken show-stealing turns on T Bone

Burnett-helmed projects like last year's *New Basement Tapes*, doing retooled Bob Dylan tunes alongside Marcus Mumford and Elvis Costello, and at the blockbuster 2013 New York concert that coincided with the release of the Coen brothers' *Inside Llewyn Davis*. Now, with the Chocolate Drops on hiatus, Giddens is

having a solo coming-out party, displaying her classical vocal training and ability to reanimate traditional music in her own nuanced image.

KEY TRACKS:"She's Got You,"
"Shake Sugaree"

Produced by Burnett, Tomorrow Is My

Turn is a feminist tour of the American roots
canon – from Nina Simone to Dolly Parton to Odetta. Giddens
digs into the tortured lost tales of folk-song heroines like Geeshie
Wiley and Elizabeth Cotten. Backed by slick session pros, a song
like Sister Rosetta Tharpe's "Up Above My Head" doesn't quite
achieve the blazing gospel fury it deserves. But most of the time,
as on a soulful version of Patsy Cline's "She's Got You," Giddens
imbues these classics with a freshness and vitality that feel right
at home in 2015.



Various Artists

Fifty Shades of Grey:
Original Motion Picture
Soundtrack Republic **
Sia and the Weeknd highlight a
freaky pop blockbuster

Taking cues from the Twilight and Hunger Games soundtracks, this companion to Fifty Shades of Grey is a blockbuster in its own right. Sexing up the affair are new songs by artists like Sia and Ellie Goulding, a couple of hot Beyoncé remixes and the occasional classic (Rolling Stones, Frank Sinatra). There's even a Springsteen cover: Awolnation's smoldering "I'm on Fire." On "Meet Me in the Middle," Jessie Ware oozes soulful sensuality over a Prince-style bump-andgrind. But it's the Weeknd who works in the darkest shades on "Earned It (Fifty Shades of Grey)," which, with its whiplash strings, brings some Bond-theme drama to all the kink. CHIICK ARNOLD



Aphex Twin

Computer Controlled Instruments Pt2 EP Warp

***¹/₂

Mysterious electronic god keeps fans guessing with a trippy EP

Richard D. James, EDM's deadbeat dad, returned after 13 years of silence last year with the masterful Syro. This surprise EP - along with hours of other music that he appears to be posting to Soundcloud lately - suggests that there's plenty more left on his fabled hard drive. (Maybe there's even a *Pt1* somewhere.) Among 13 tracks that plunk down somewhere between John Cage's prepared piano compositions and a Martian breakbeats record, the adroit android thump of "diskhat ALL prepared1mixed 13" and the contemplative "DISKPREPT1" show the maestro finely mincing live drums and instruments into a sweet treat. ΔΝΟΥ RETA

GAMES



Not Goodwill Hunting

Get ready to battle the meanest monsters on the other side of the planet By Atul Kumar

Evolve P54, Xbox One (Rs. 3499) PC (Rs. 999) 2K Games

****1/2

EVOLVE IS A 4 VERSUS 1 multiplayer first person shooter. You and three other buddies team up as hunters against one of your friends who plays as the hunted. And by hunted, we mean a monster that can quickly turn into an unstoppable behemoth complete with tentacles and spewing lightning in some cases too. Hence the game's title, Evolve. It makes for rather interesting gameplay.

While it features a singleplayer mode, *Evolve* is best with friends or the very least, random strangers online. Reason being, each hunter class, be it the 'bog standard medic' or the 'sneaky trapper' need to work in tandem to get



the best out of the enemy. So if you're playing as an 'assault class hunter' with a rocket launcher, you'll need the assistance of someone as a trapper to slow down the monster, just enough for you to score a perfect hit. The complementary skill sets make cooperation a fun necessity.

Games take place at a fast clip, starting off with hunters trying to seek out the monster who is trying his best to stay hidden, devouring the local wildlife along the way. The longer the monster stays hidden, the more powerful it grows. This makes *Evolve* into an elaborate game of cat and mouse. Except it takes place in a sci-fi world replete with a fantastic art style and a host of well written characters. For a game squarely focussed on multiplayer, the hunters have a sense of character and uniqueness that pulls *Evolve* away from the burgeoning herd of shooters.

All in all, *Evolve* is a fun game that's well worth the price of admission. Just make sure you bring your friends along.

SPECIAL OFFER

SUBSCRIBE AND SAVE 50%











YES! I wish to subscribe to the term indicated below

All prices in Indian ₹

Term	Issues	News-stand	You Pay	Discount	Assured Gift	
1 year	12	1200	720	40%	Music CD worth 1000/- Music CD worth 1500/-	
2 years	24	2400	1200	50%		

I AM A NEW SUBSCRIBER	I AM AN EXISTING SUBSCRIBER (Subscription no)	and I v	

wish to extend my current subscription.

Name: Mr/Ms				Age:
Mailing address:				
_	City:	Pin Code:	State:	
Company name:	Designation:		email:	
Phone:	Phone	Mobile:		
Vehicle owned (Please name brand)		lidays taken annually: International	Domes	stic
Monthly household income (Please tick)	< ₹ 50,000	>₹ 1,00,000		
Please find enclosed Cheque/DD no.	dated:		drawn on:	

Date:

In favour of MW.Com India Pvt. Ltd. (add ₹ 50/- for non-Mumbai cheques)

Terms and Conditions
Offer valid till 31st March 2015. MW.Com India Pvt. Ltd. will not be responsible for any postal delays and no correspondence will be entertained. Allow 4 to 6 weeks for start of subscription. Please fill in the order form and mail with your payment to MW.COM(INDIA) PVT. LTD., 401, 4th Floor, Todi Building, Behind Ideal Industrial Estate, Mathuradas Mill Compound, Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel, Mumbal-400013. You can also subscribe online at www.rollingstoneindia.com or mail us at circulation@rollingstone-india.com.

DOWNLOAD DIGITAL **EDITION FROM MAGZTER**

Signature:



On the Shelf

Power Plazma by Bata

Continuing their legacy of fine craftsmanship and comfortable footwear, Bata is here with a pair of shoes that work just as hard as you do. The Power Plazma has a cushioning system that absorbs intense heel impact forces, making them a comfortable accessory for long stretches of time and intense workout. So whether it is tennis, football or cross training, now you need not worry about painful feet and just give your best.





Joyrider Collection by GANT

With summertime approaching, lend your casual days and nights an updated sense of style with GANT's Joyrider collection of moccasins. These classic moccasins are full leather inner lined with contrast stitching. Be it solid shades or soothing nautical colours that is your style, the high quality soft suede and rubber outsole make this pair a flawless fit.

Classic Slip-On by Vans

Premium materials, colors and patterns; the original classic slip-on for men gets a stylish upgrade. Style your feet in a selection of leather variations in unisex sizing with fine details on the sneaker design. The diamond-perforated leather or an all white blac de Blanc option with crackled leather gives it pre-worn appearance that only gets better with wear. An embossed mini-checkerboard in port royale, embossed weave in black and embossed croc in black and wine-tasting complete the leather offering.



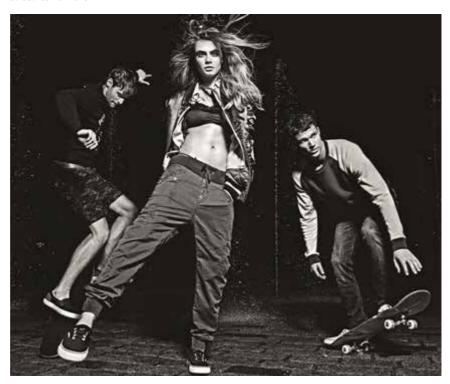


Oxford Shoes by Footin

Timelessness always has been a head turner. Oxford shoes from the Footin SS'15 Collection add just that to your ensemble. Whether you choose to dress up in a well fitted suit or down with chinos, this classic pair polishes off an outfit with just the right amount of sophistication and style.

Spring/Summer 2015 Collection Made For Mischief by Pepe Jeans

Unveil your playful side with the latest collection from Pepe Jeans. With a variety of elements in play, the collection combines Pepe Jeans' love for arts and culture with youthfulness and fun. Rebellious and free-spirited, Made For Mischief is for the mature, sophisticated dresser as well as the casual, street fashion lover.



YUREKA by Micromax

Let your inner tech geek out. New age technology brand YU, by Micromax will soon launch its first and much awaited device, Yureka. Yureka is the first device from YU to be launched with Cyanogen OS that has an exclusive OTA firmware updates and support in India. Bringing in a new era of android development in India, it will allow users to root their devices, without voiding the warranty, which means endless customization on your device and it offers an enhanced product experience. Its features include the Snapdragon 615 processor with integrated 4G LTE Cat4 modem and 64-bit multi-core CPU for high speed connectivity, high performance and power efficiency. The 5.5 inch HD IPS display and 2 GB DDR3 RAM allows for flawless multitasking and efficiency and a Qualcomm® Adreno™ 405 GPU enables an incredible amount of visual detail in 3D imagery, smooth frame rates and full HD video with H.265 HEVC support. The device will be exclusively available on Amazon.





Silver Shield Range by Wrangler

The denim trend is back and here to stay and it is time you made additions to your closet. The outdoor denim brand Wrangler's Silver Shield range, with graphic printed t-shirts, shirts and denims, and meant to style your adventurous spirit. For riders, the apparel is powered by N9 Pure Silver technology which protect it against body odour, a perfect companion for your biker's expeditions.



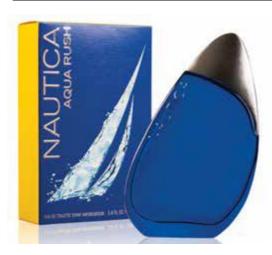
R5 by OPPO

Show the world your stylish side with this slim new smartphone, the OPPO R5. The R5 has a stainless steel body with a hand polished, micro-arc frame that makes the phone strong and durable and also elegant in design. Apart from its haute-couture looks, the R5 also comes with a superior, innovative technology that provides outstanding user personalization and maintains a constant cool temperature of the device, so you don't have worry about over-heating.

Jaguar Innovation by Jaguar

Jaguar has launched two new, distinct fragrances for men under the Jaguar Innovation. Both Eau de Toilette and Eau de Cologne posses the same heart, but are infused with a different top. The cologne is a lighter variant, but with compelling composition on its own. With a seductive character, both fragrances have a fresh and woody aroma that awakens desire and is utterly irresistible.





Aqua Rush by Nautica

Infused with amber wood. water musks and teak wood, the Nautica Aqua Rush is a bold fragrance for the steadfast, masculine waterman. The energetic scent opens with brisk top notes of sea breeze accord and Yuzu Splash with a twist of spicy-sweet Coriander, while its hearts contains the hints of watermint, wlary sage absolute and violet leaves, epitomizing the crisp and woody Aqua Rush as a fragrance for a man without limits.

Love Story By Chloe and Reveal by Calvin Klein

Captivate everyone in the room with the freshness of Neroli and the sensuality of orange blossom, in the fragrance Love Story by Chloe. Infused with jasmine stephanotis that lingers in the air with the cedar, the fragrance will make you the centre of attention, making the rest fade into a blur. Strike a sensual, confident note with the latest fragrance by Calvin Klein, Reveal. It captures the erotic scent of the skin with its unique raw salt signature and sandalwood, making you feel like an irresistible, provocative and unpredictable woman.





CHRONO CLASSIC 1/100 by Victorinox

Victorinox's latest offering is an eye-catching version of their signature look. Set yourself apart with the Chrono Classic's accuracy of 1/100th of a second, thanks to the Swiss-Made FM13D quartz movement by Soprod. The chronograph's functionality is matched with a contemporary design featuring a silver dial and a cut-top pyramidal guilloche decoration on the two rotating discs, meant to pay tribute to the origins of Victorinox. The timepiece is available both with a stainless steel strap or a leather version.



Astron GPS Solar Chronograph - Novak Dokovic Limited Edition by Seiko

If limited edition watches are your thing, the Astron GPS Solar Chronograph is a lustworthy timekeeper. To be launched by Seiko, only 2,500 pieces of the Novak Djokovic-inspired piece will be available for purchase. The watch comes with GPS controlled time and time-zone adjustment, signal reception result indication and world time function spanning 40 time-zones It also comes with daylight saving and power saving functions set in a chunky rose-gold stainless-steel dial and an extra strength silicon band with a three-fold clasp and a push botton release. The sapphire crystal glass comes with a super clear coating and water resistance upto 10 bar and is designed for rough use, making it a perfect addition to your collection.

Hunter XT by Victorinox

Enjoy your weekend hunting trips with the Victorinox Hunter XT pocket knife and it's easy to use features. Its handles are fitted with a non slip, two-component material that provides an exceptional grip, making the pocket knife sit securely and comfortably in the hand. The two blades can be easily folded out using an oval thumbhole, so you can access them without having to look down or use both hands.



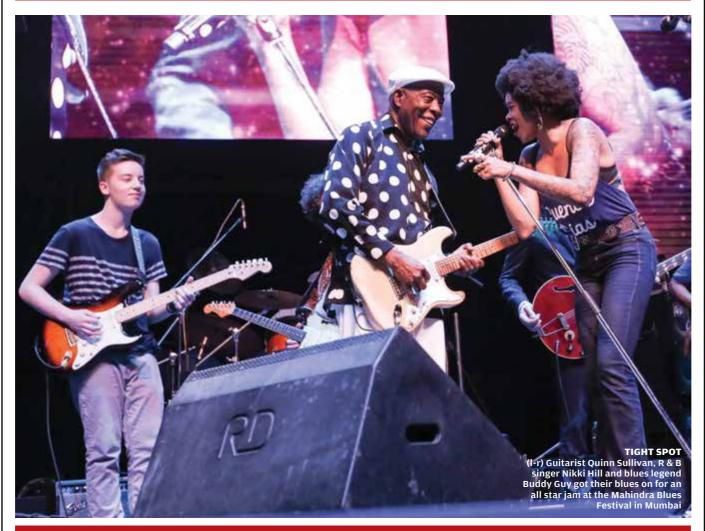


Lexicon Dual-Caster Tote by Victorinox

With a comfortable grip on the handle and wheels that roll smoothly over any surface, expect a hassle free traveling experience with the Lexcion Dual-Caster Tote. Its lockable YKK racquet coil zippers provide superior burst strength for your luggage while the corner guards protect the case from impact and abrasion. The bag also comes with a tracking program that will help you track your bag anywhere in the world should it ever be lost - for free.



GIGS







CASIO G-SHOCK PRESENTS ROLLING STONE METAL AWARDS 2015

This year's annual RSMA, the only awards event to honor metal in India, features performancs by Bengaluru thrash/death metal Inner Sanctum, Delhi-based prog metalcore band Colossal Figures, Mumbai prog metal band The Minerva Conduct and more in Mumbai. Crowd favorites, extreme metallers Demonic Resurrection, post-hardcore band Scribe and prog metallers Skyharbor lead the pack with nominations under Best Album, Best Song and Best Band, while newer acts such as Shillong metallers Aberrant, Delhi math metal band Kraken and Colossal Figures are also nominated.





RSMA PRE-GIGS

A host of pre-gigs happening around the country, as a countdown to the awards night takes place in Bengaluru, Delhi and Jaipur. While Delhi groove/tech metal band Undying Inc and Mumbai thrash/death metal band Devoid will perform in Delhi and Jaipur, folk metallers The Down Troddence and thrash metal band Chaos are among top names at the Bengaluru pre-gig.

March 7th
DISTRICT 9, JAIPUR

<mark>March 8th</mark> ANTISOCIAL, NEW DELHI

March 15th INDIGO LIVE, BENGALURU

Rolling stoneindia.com/

THE LOST PARTY

The first edition of the Lost Party will be hosted in Lavasa in Maharashtra. The city is two hours away from Pune, surrounded by lush, green hills. The festival features electronica artists like Nucleya, Dualist Enquiry and Reggae Rajahs.

March 6th - 8th LAVASA, PUNE MAHARASHTRA. Thelostparty.com

SHEPHERD

Bengaluru-based sludge rock/metal band, which comprises members from the thrash/death metal band Inner Sanctum and stoner/doom band Bevar Sea, will release their debut full-length album Stereolithic Riffalocalypse.

March 6th

THE HUMMING TREE,

BENGALURU

Facebook.com/ shepherdrock

PARVAAZ

Bengaluru-based psychedelic/progressive rock band, who released their debut full-length album Baran last year, perform as part of Holi festivities at the three-day festival Rang-Utsav this month. The festival also includes sets by comedy rock act Live Banned, alt rock band Brim River Bridge and prog rock/metal band Rainburn.

March 8th MANPHO SPECTRUM, BEN-GALURU

Facebook.com/ Parvaazmusic

STAGE 42

Stage 42 is a multientertainment festival spread across India. Apart from sets by Mumbai metal band Bhanayak Maut and experimental band PINKNOISE from Kolkata, among others. American stand-up star, Jerry Seinfeld, will headline the festival in Mumbai.

Bhayanak Maut
March 7th
COUNTERCULTURE,
BENGALURU

Madboy/Mink, The F16s
March 13th
ANTISOCIAL, NEW DELHI

PINKNOISE
March 14th
SOMEPLACE ELSE,
KOLKATA

Jerry Seinfeld <mark>March 14th and 15th</mark> NSCI STADIUM, MUMBAI

ViceVersa, Madboy/Mink

March 20th BLUE FROG, PUNE

Lagori, Parvaaz March 27th INDIGO LIVE, BENGALURU Insider.in/stage42

RIVER BANK FESTIVAL

Slated to take place on the banks of Imphal river, the second edition of the acoustic music festival includes performances by local artists such as experimental rock band The Koi, folk rock band Imphal Talkies, folk singer Guru Rewben Mashangva, prog metal band The Wishess, hard rock band Maniac, among others.

March 25th

SINGJAMEI THOKCHOM LEIKAI, IMPHAL Facebook.com/ ImphalTalkies

metalawards

THE PLAYLIST

OUR FAVORITE SONGS, ALBUMS AND VIDEOS RIGHT NOW



2. Steve Earle and the Dukes

"Baby Baby Baby (Baby)"

"I got a girl that live way down South/A little town they call 'Shut My Mouth,' " the roots-rock hero sings on this hunk of Chess Records blues guitar, rough-edged vocals and chicken-grease bass, from his new *Terraplane*.



3. Thermal and a Quarter "Like Me" ◀

The alt rock band from Bengaluru take down social media on the song "Like Me" from their sixth album *The Scene*. It takes balls to mock your own ilk and TAAQ do a brilliant job of mocking bands that look to Facebook likes for validation. Burn.



On the first single from her upcoming LP, the Aussie songwriter skewers music-biz phonies ("Gimme all your money and I'll make some origami, honey/I think you're a joke, but I don't find you very funny!") over caustic *Nevermind* guitars. The video, where Barnett plays a depressed clown, is even more hilarious.



"Pay Attention"

If this perfect poppunk sugar rush had been released in 1995, it would have been on MTV nonstop. Any fan of early Weezer is sure to love it.



6. Torres "Strange Hellos"

This rising singer-songwriter's latest tune starts as a quietly seething ballad - then she torches it into a furious grungy rocker. We can't wait for her new LP, *Sprinter* (due out in May).







Common

We asked the rapper-actor - who's up for an Oscar for Selma's "Glory" - to tell us what he thought of five tunes.

OLD

Curtis Mayfield "We the People Who Are

Darker Than Blue"

Man, this song hits me in a deep place. It comes from the voice of the struggle. Curtis was trying to tell black people that we're all the same.

Do or Die "Po Pimp"

This is a Chicago classic. Anytime I hear it, it reminds me of where I come from. It came out in the Nineties, but we were living in the Seventies.

NEW

D'Angelo

"The Charade"
I really love this song. "All we wanted was a chance to talk/'Stead, we only got outlined in chalk." It's revolutionary. You feel the deep pain in it.

Lupe Fiasco "Deliver"

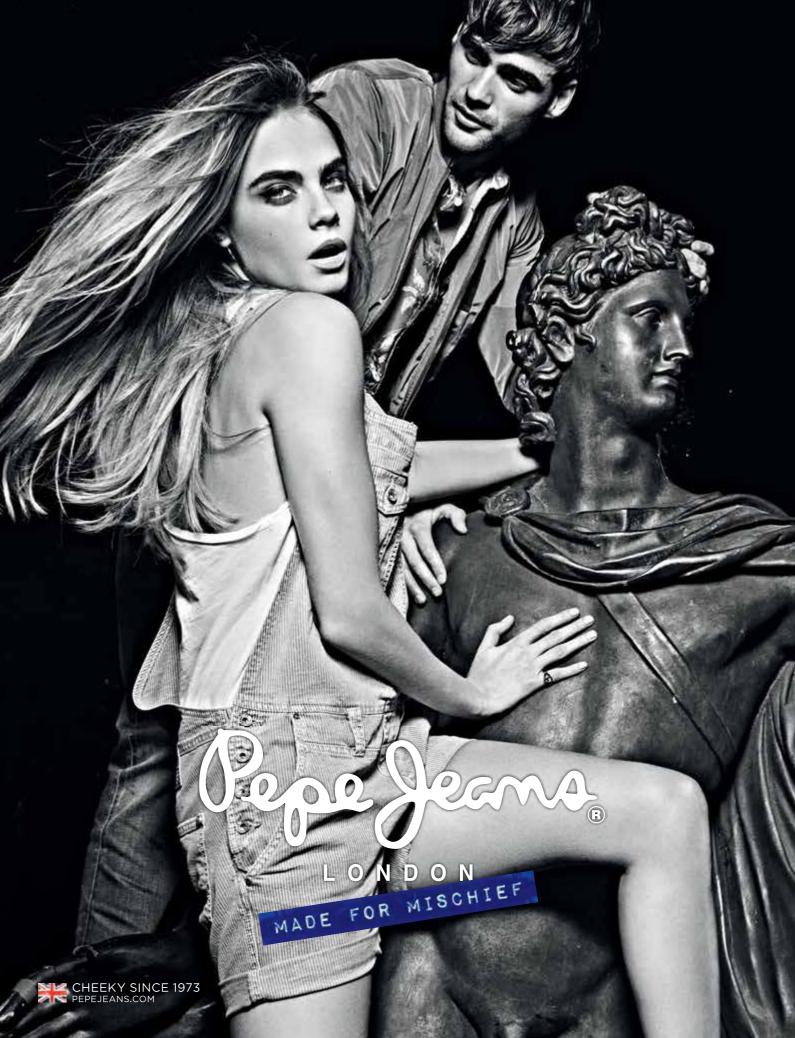
Lupe is one of the dopest MCs around town. He knows the ghetto, but he's going to show you another side of the ghetto. And he can hop on any style of beat.

DeJ Loaf "Try Me"

She's a unique voice from Detroit. I like the rawness - and I like when she says, "Rock that all-white when I'm feelin' godly." That

shows she has depth.

94 | ROLLING STONE | rollingstoneindia.com





BENGALURU, ETHOS SUMMIT ROLEX BOUTIQUE - 080 22II 3976 CHENNAI, THE HELVETICA ROLEX BOUTIQUE - 072 9991 II58 KOLKATA, EXCLUSIVE LINES ROLEX BOUTIQUE - 033 2282 5245 & 033 2287 0921 MUMBAI, SWISS PARADISE ROLEX BOUTIQUE - 022 2833 9991 MUMBAI, TIME AVENUE ROLEX BOUTIQUE - 022 2651 5757 NEW DELHI, KAPOOR WATCH CO. ROLEX BOUTIQUE - 011 4699 0000 ROLEX WATCH CO.PVT LTD MUMBAI - 022 6625 3600 WWW.ROLEX.COM